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VEDIC REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

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"We do not worship many Gods, we do not even worship one God; we worship the only God. We only invoke Him in various names and forms. Every aspect becomes a devatā. This is the Vision of Īsvara of a mature person!"

- Poojya Swami Dayananda Saraswati

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SYNOPSIS

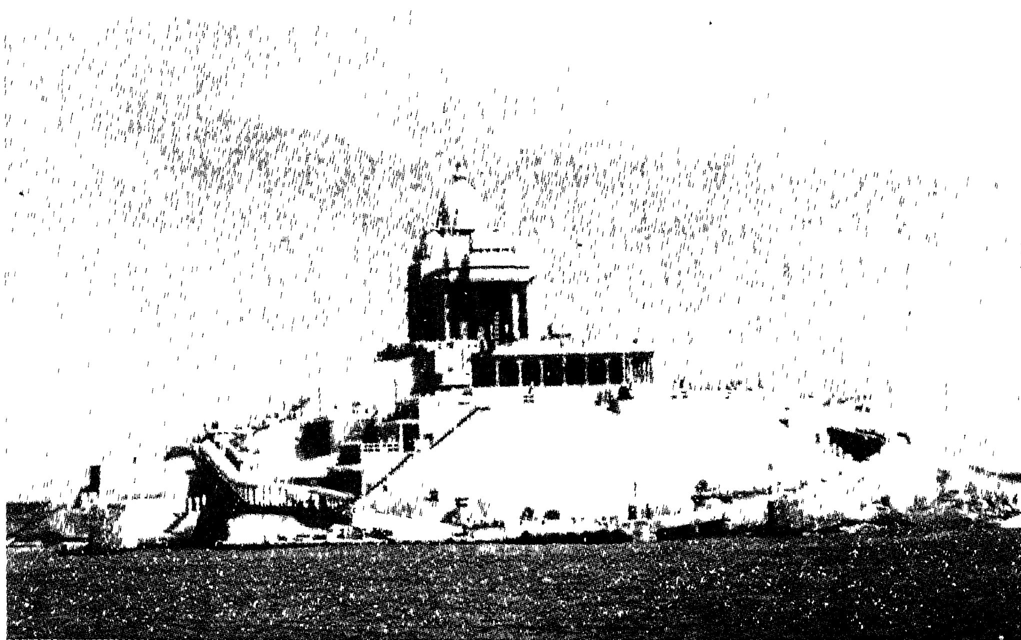
Story-telling is one of our ancient traditions. To point the moral and adorn the tale is a tradition that has been inextricably woven into the matrix of the national culture of India. The greatest philosophical truths are encapsulated in the form of stories. That is how we have the Upanishadic stories. Not only at the spiritual but also at the mundane level, stories have never failed to have their impact on the people. To the young and old alike, stories make a ready appeal. But then, for our purpose, we should define the scope. The title, *Value Education Through Stories – The Indian Tradition* sets the theme for our purpose, that is, for the next issue of the *Vivekananda Kendra Patrika.*

The Traditional Concepts of Dharma which we have in view for our purpose are :-

(1) *Ahimsa* (Non-violence), (2) *Satya* (Truth), (3) *Asteya* (Non-stealing), (4) *Brahmacharya* (Self-control), (5) *Aparigraha* (Non-covetousness), (6) *Soucha* (Purity), (7) *Santosha* (Contentedness), (8) *Tapa* (Effort), (9) *Ishwarapranidhana* (Surrendering to God), (10) *Swaadhyaya* (Self-studies), (11) *Shama* (Control of mind), (12) *Datta* (Gift), (13) *Dama* (Physical control or discipline) and (14) *Daya* (Compassion).

The said issue of the *Patrika* will be an attempt at discussing these traditional and holistic principles of righteousness (i.e.) Dharma.

After handling a series of more serious themes in the last few issues of the *Patrik* lighter theme like the one mentioned above might give a relief to the readers, while at tl same time it holds in tact the value-oriented approach of our publication.



Editorial

VIVEKANANDA KENDRA PATRIKA
FEBRUARY 2001 - JULY 2001 VOL. 30 No.1

VEDIC REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Purely material philosophies that flooded the world in the wake of Western colonialism have kept humankind for centuries under the spell of what is increasingly perceived as the Eurocentric approach to life. In the millennium that has drawn to a close the world has undergone changes in mind and body that have made every idea which once looked unalterable and most satisfying, eventually redundant and even harmful. The result was that, the 20th century became more a battleground of death and destruction than a haven of life and boundless happiness as the godless materialistic philosophies had promised. Every seeming success in the last cèntury has been a proven failure and the world is now bereft of stability and security at all levels. Need is felt acutely for values based on Eternal Truth to stabilise and protect humanity caught in the whirlwind of change, without which the present

paradigms cannot lead to harmonious evolution of humankind nor bring hope and fulfilment to life at individual and collective levels.

THE PARADIGM SHIFT–CALL OF DHARMA

At certain levels of modern thought process there is already a conscious move from the fragmented towards holistic concepts and new paradigms are emerging in the horizon. Based on this, search is already on for a compendium of values to evolve a lifestyle which recognizes the deep aspiration of man and yet remain fully committed to universally acceptable moral, ethical and social values which enrich man and integrate him with nature. This is the right time for us to respond to the call of destiny and to demonstrate to the world how the evolving paradigms of the West have a philosophic foundation in our Dharmic traditions based on the Advaitic vision of the Vedic seers.

This is the enlightenment which human race is waiting to receive from our ancient nation. This was the call of Mother that took Swami Vivekananda to the West to deliver her message based on the "solidarity of the whole Universe and interrelatedness of all that exist therein." He called upon his countrymen to realise this truth as their foremost duty, make dharma a living force in our individual and national life and then gift it to the human race.

Thousands of years of spiritual experience has equipped us with knowledge of how to discriminate between the Eternal and the ephemeral, the Absolute and the relative, the Infinite and the finite. A great moral obligation therefore rests on us of enlightening the world at this critical juncture of a paradigm shift. We have to gear ourselves up to effect a spiritual orientation to the material pursuit of humanity waking up to the call of Sri Ramakrishna–Vivekananda and assure that Bharat reclaims the glory of being the Universal Mother and Guru and provides the guiding light for humanity caught in the whirlpool of the current Eurocentric life.

The world is caught in an octopus-like grip of the immediate and has abandoned everything that transcends the immediate. We find anguish and even a sense of

helplessness in the writings of many who have left their imprints on modern world history. Dag Hammerskjold, the renowned Secretary General of the United Nations Organisation wrote, "Unless the world has spiritual rebirth, civilisation is doomed." Arnold Toynbee, the great historian hopefully points to India : "It is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in the self-destruction of the human race....At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is the Indian way."

The challenge before us today is to generate within us the courage and will power to turn away from the baneful influences of the current Western paradigms, provide an effective living basis for the paradigm shift that is already on and to expedite the global transition towards it, based on the Advaitic Vision cherished and nurtured by Bharat over scores of centuries.

THE WORK BEFORE US

This Punyabhoomi Bharat enshrining Sanatana Dharma is today comparable to an ancient temple in ruins. When we look back into the folds of history we are struck at the marvel of this temple, Bharat. We find that while many nations merely existed, their cultures and civilisations were just flickering and disappearing, here was a nation which existed and continue to exist with a purpose for millennia at a stretch. This was a spiritual laboratory in which major spiritual experiments in discovering the purpose and goal of human life were going on. It is the spiritual data collected from these that have shaped the structural framework of this temple, built over the millennia.

Time has its own way of dealing with things, however grand it may be and our temple was also not spared by Time. Certain portions crumbled, others just disappeared, some were purposely mutilated by religious vandals, while the bulk of it simply got buried under the sand of time. It is a wonder that what little of the gigantic spires were spared from all these devastations still stand out, enchanting enough and suggestive of the splendour that lay buried under the debris. This keeps haunting one and all who approach it.

Excavations did begin, but for different purposes. Some were motivated to belittle, some to totally destroy what remained and a rare few, to re-establish the ancient glory. Each cultural period in our history carried out its own renovations, gave its own cultural tint to it. Like some of the ancient sculptures and paintings which have been coated over and over by enthusiastic but ignorant renovators, India stands today, superimposed by many a cultural hue, ill understood and misunderstood by a majority of her own children.

Yet, silver linings are visible here and there and that is where hope still sparkles. Most important is, the Nation had found its nationhood and now it is up to its people to give it the correct and right identity. Serious researchers, both Indian and Western equipped with scientific tools are at it.

Now that the temple stands fully revealed, it is time to assess the damages before renovation is started. Three deep cracks have left their indelible marks, which make every patriotic Indian deeply disturbed. These have deepened into what appear like the permanent faultlines in the formation of a continent, areas prone to earthquakes. Fifty years of nationhood with secular democracy has not been able to correct this and has done more harm than good.

Every true non-Indian friend of India, (leaving aside those within the country who may be more subjective) has felt sorry about the cracks on this most beautiful and glorious Temple in the world. If only these faults could be rectified, renovation may be quicker and easier.

To quote one such friend, Francois Gautier, there are three faults of "disinformations" : "The first disinformation of India: Aryans Vs Dravidians". "The second disinformation : Ah, The Vedas, so much misconception, so many prejudices, so much distortions have been spewed about this monument of a book, this unparalleled epic". "The third disinformation: the Caste System."

All right thinking Indians would agree with Gautier that these are the major faultlines and no leader in India today knows how to rectify these faults. Unlike ordinary material faults, where Western expertise may be of some use, here it is not, because, the West, as we know and `blindly adore' was not even conceived of as an entity when this temple was being built. The plans, structures and materials used in this Temple of temples are just not available in today's world.

The work before us is indeed great as we start cleaning up the debris and start the renovation of this temple of ours. The very first thing, as Gautier advises rightly, is to learn to look at things and events as they really are and not conditioned by the "prism that has been fashioned by centuries of Western thinking." It would be a Herculean task to eradicate the 'enduring pattern', 'subtle disinformations' and `immutable groves' created by the alien educators, which continue to be the module of modern Indian education. These have been further reinforced through fundamentalistic dogmatism and strait-jacketed materialistic ideologies. `Educated' Indians today consider the latter as the adornments of their personal outfit and refuse to accept the real sparkling gems from their own spiritual treasure-house. They are satisfied at being merely the `clearing houses of imported thoughts and lifestyles.'

Discrediting our Veda, the Srutis, as the gibberings of some nomads instead of holding them as the revelations of enlightened souls, our rishis, is indeed a serious disinformation. The purpose behind is very clear; that is, to remove the integrating force that held together this mighty nation of unimaginable diversities together and to disintegrate it to the extent possible to serve the political designs of the rulers. Withdrawal of the senses, tapas, sadhana, etc., being totally unknown to the materialistic culture, these aliens could not discover the right key to open the Treasure Chest of the Vedas and naturally took them to be of no consequence. They could not imagine that the esoteric knowledge contained there, kept hidden from the casual eyes of the uninitiated, could be evoked through the divine potential in our own self. This disinformation was again passed on to us through our secular education with the

result that today's 'educated' Indians take pride in having come out of the Vedic heritage! The credit of opening the eyes of the world to the magnificence and universality of Vedas and Vedanta goes to that illustrious son of our motherland, Swami Vivekananda, though some well-meaning friends outside the country had earlier initiated studies in this direction. It is only the Advaitic vision of the Vedas that can clean up our society of the innumerable evils that are perpetrated in the name of religion and social practices.

The tools for cleaning up and renovation have to be modelled after the most ancient tools available in our own heritage - Satya and Dharma. From where to start? and how to proceed? What technology is to be used to see that the faultlines deepen no more but start closing in? How to charge the younger generation with the responsibility of preserving and carrying over what we have achieved to the next millennium? Where and why have we failed to inspire our youth? How to take up the challenge of Science and make Science itself a tool for renovation?

The condition precedent to preparing this nation for this task is to dehypnotise the anglicised and anglicising minds of our people, making them turn away from being merely the clearing houses of imported thoughts and lifestyles and transforming themselves into instruments to transmit that vision to the world. This is the audience which Swami Vivekananda had in mind when he said, "Bring light to the ignorant and more light to the educate for the vanities of the education of our time are tremendous." In short, the task is to reverse the Macaulayan distortion of the national mind of Bharat.

Let Swamiji's own words be our guide in the work before us. "A broader and more generous conception of life is before us; and although at first we have been deluded a little to narrow things down, we are finding out today that these generous impulses which are at work, these broader conceptions of life are the logical interpretation of what is in our ancient books. They are the carrying out, to the rigorously logical effect, of the primary conception of our own ancestors. To become broad, to go out, to

amalgamate, to universalise is the end of our aims." Let our global mission draw its sustenance from this Vedic Vision.

The seminar Vedic Reflections for the New Millennium was our second seminar to involve young scholars to think about the changing paradigms. With more and more effort in this direction we hope our path will become clearer and our efforts would produce some tangible effect.

- M. Lakshmi Kumari


PERSONAL ACCIDENT POLICY
UNITED INDIA

VEDIC REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Justice M. RAMA JOIS
Retired Chief Justice
Punjab & Haryana High Court

The following is the full text of the inaugural address delivered at the seminar held in Ernakulam

At the outset, I am of the view that the "Establishment of Vedic Vision Foundation" during the Silver Jubilee Year of Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari and the arranging of the present Seminar on Vedic Reflections for the New Millennium, by the Foundation will turn out to be a great even in the history of mankind, for this happens to be the greatest need of the time, to prevent humanity from committing cultural suicide towards which direction it is moving fast. The five themes for the Seminar have been selected carefully having due regard to the present and immediate need of humanity. They are :

1. Basic Vedic Concepts - Satya, Dharma, Yagna, Purusharthas, Mahavakyas, Mantras, etc.
2. Scientific Wisdom - Origin of the Universe, Creation, Evolution, Time.
3. Values for holistic living and sustained development in tune with nature.
4. Dharmic blueprint for economic upliftment, Management, Politics.
5. Education–Art, Architecture.

The fact that revered Swami Sri Ranganathanandaji, who is an authority on eternal values of life flowing from the Vedas and allied literature is the main source of inspiration, being the Chief Patron of this Seminar, signifies the seminal importance of the Seminar.

Several Vedic scholars and those well versed in Dharma and Bharatiya cultural values are presenting their valuable papers during this Seminar.

I am blessed and feel greatly honoured by the invitation extended to me to inaugurate such an important Seminar. I

express my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Organisers of this Seminar for conferring this honour on me.

I am entirely in agreement with the view that "Vedic Wisdom" is the only panacea for the numerous problems which mankind is confronted with at present and to proceed on a righteous path. Before indicating my reasons, for such a view, I consider it necessary to briefly relate the state of Human Society at the end of this (20th) Century.

During the last one hundred years the achievements of man in Science are astounding. Fastest modes of conveyance and communication which were not even dreamt of earlier have become a reality. Innumerable articles for luxurious living and physical comfort and enjoyment are designed and manufactured. While this is one side of the picture, see the other side. Arms and ammunitions primarily intended for self protection of the nations have been manufactured and stored in large quantities which are said to be sufficient to destroy the world twenty times over. Apart from this they are being used to inflict injury and misery on fellow human beings and terrorist activities, hijacking of planes, killing of innocent human beings, etc.

There has been huge hoardings put up in Delhi - "Be Careful" may be in any form, below it pictures of a torch, a transistor, a purse, a suitcase, a clock, etc., are shown. I thought that it must be with reference to God. But what was written below was "Bomb" and it said that those who notice such an article in public places were asked to report to the Police. Such is the situation.

There has been an alarming increase in the rate of crimes. Every day newspapers carry news of several crimes. Where and how can we have sufficient number of policemen and Magistrates to deal with such large number of offences.

Families which are the fundamental units of any society or Nation, and which constitute the sole source of supplying good citizens are being destroyed. This aspect is highlighted in the recent book *Fatherless America* authored by an American author David Blankenhorn, excerpts from which are quoted in the *Vivekananda Kendra Patrika* of August 1999. In that book, the author observes that "A good family man is an endangered species in America." He points out that 40 percent of the American children sleep in fatherless homes. As a result, children grow like wild animals and become a liability to the society. The former President of U.S. Senate, Newtt Gingrich had also made the following painful remarks: "12 year old boy shoots - 14 year unmarried girls carry babies. At 16, many suffer from AIDS. What sort of civilization we are

building? This ailment is not confined to America only but is spreading to all other countries including ours like an epidemic disease.

Respect for womanhood was one of the most cherished values of life from times immemorial in India. Women were not considered as an object of physical pleasure by man, but were regarded as divine treasure for family life. In view of the role assigned by nature to women to be mothers, and in view of the fact that the mother is the dearest person on earth to an individual and she moulds the character of her children and in view of the intense love and affection, a mother has for her children, and her readiness to make tremendous sacrifices for the sake of her children, the mother came to be regarded as God-incarnate (*Mata Pratyaksha Devata*). Further, as every women is a potential mother, every woman and even small girls came to be regarded as sacred and respected as one's own mother.

This value appears to have been created and cultivated assiduously as an antidote to the sexual propensity of man, for, once the value that every woman is equal to mother is ingrained in the heart of individuals, sinful thoughts of committing any offence against women get destroyed.

But this value is being eroded greatly under the influence of western materialistic ideas. Women are being treated as merely an article of pleasure, and meant for exploiting for evil, sexual desires of man and for trade and commerce.

Regarding the sanctity and importance attached to womanhood in this land, it is appropriate to quote the words of the Supreme Court of India in which the Court castigated Air India, while striking down a rule framed by it, which provided that the services of an Air Hostess shall stand terminated on first pregnancy, in the following words :-

> *"It seems to us that the termination of the services of an Air Hostess under such circumstances is not only a callous and cruel act but an open insult to Indian womanhood (motherhood) - the most sacrosanct and cherished institution. We are constrained to observe that such a course of action is extremely detestable and abhorrent to the notions of a civilised society. Apart from being grossly unethical, it smacks of a deep-rooted sense of utter selfishness at the cost of all human values.*
>
> *(Para - 80, page - 1850)*

The above observation applies with greater force to the abuse of female sex for

commercial advertisements by exhibiting obscene matters. Ugly exhibition of women in the guise of beauty contests have reached such proportions as would totally destroy the moral and physical strength of the youth. But young girls participate in such activities proudly without realising its disastrous consequences on their life as well as the life of their family and the future generation.

Further, there has been all-round moral degradation in this land resulting in rampant corruption and misappropriation, in public administration and erosion of professional ethics. For the sake of earning more money, fellow human beings in misery are being exploited. In short, many have become "Demons in human form."

It is this alarming situation which makes it imperative to take upon the himalayan task of carrying the message of the Vedas to the entire humanity without loss of time.

VEDIC VALUES FOR HARMONIOUS LIVING

A study of the four Vedas, Upanishads and the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the *smritis* and other literature, which are in abundance, in which the basic principles laid down in the Vedas were further developed, indicate that on an indepth study of the entire universe, ancient Indian seers and visionaries, formulated rules, the observance of which would ensure harmonious and peaceful existence of *Vyashti* (individual) human being, *Samashti* (human society), *Srishti* (all living beings including plants and animals as also Natural resources) were evolved on the basis that they have all been created by God and he is in all of them and therefore no violence should be caused to anyone as it amounts to causing injury to God himself. Those rules are of universal application and of eternal value. Dharma is the compendious term given for all such rules put together.

IMPORTANCE OF DHARMA

Dharma is the greatest and the most valuable contribution to humanity by Bharata Varsha. On account of its antiquity, utility and universality, the very mention of that word rouses the conscience of an individual in this land. The Supreme Court of India in its recent judgement has explained the importance of Dharma thus :-

> *"Dharma" is that which upholds, nourishes or supports the stability of the society, maintains social order and secures the general well-being and progress of mankind". (A.S. Narayana Dixitalu Vs. State of A.P. 1996 (9) S.C.C. 548).*

It had sustained our Nation for the thousands of years through ups and downs, in prosperity as well as adversity.

CONTENTMENT AND MENTAL HAPPINESS - AIM OF DHARMA

On analysis of human problems, the great seers found that it is the greed of man which is the root of all misery, and for the greed of man there is no limit. Therefore, the aim of Dharma was intended to limit the greed and promote the feeling of contentment.

All our present day problems are a direct result of disregarding "Dharma" under the influence of a materialistic philosophy, in the belief that it alone can usher in happiness and secure the welfare of the people. Now it is becoming clear that human problems multiply as we go on multiplying our lust and desire for material wealth and pleasure and that the solution to all the problems, social, economic and political, which the world and our Nation are facing, in particular the crash of our moral edifice, Dharma alone is the panacea. There is no alternative to 'Dharma'. This is the eternal truth. This can be realised, if we understand the real meaning of 'Dharma'.

SCOPE OF DHARMA

Dharma is a Sanskrit expression of the widest import. There is no corresponding word in any other language. It would also be futile to attempt to give any definition of the word; it can only be explained. It has a wide variety of meanings. A few of them would enable us to understand the range of that expression. For instance, the word `Dharma' is used to mean Justice *(Nyaya)*, what is right in a given circumstance, moral values of life, pious obligations of individuals, righteous conduct in every sphere of activity, being helpful to other living beings, giving charity to individuals in need of it or to a public cause or alms to the needy, natural qualities or characteristics or properties of living beings and things, duty, as also constitutional law. Dharma like Natural Law, is unchangeable. It is not religion as understood, nay misundertood by many -

SOURCES OF DHARMA

Yagnavalkya Smriti indicated the sources of Dharma as follows:-

Yajnavalkya 1-7:

श्रुतिः स्मृतिः सदाचारः स्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः।
सम्यक्सङ्कल्पजः कामो धर्ममूलमिदं स्मृतम् ॥

Vedas, Smritis, course of good conduct and what is agreeable to the conscience proceeding from good intention constitute the sources of Dharma.

BASIC ASPECTS OF DHARMA

Dharma covers all spheres of human activity. It can be broadly classified under

three categories, namely *Samanya Dharma* [General Code of Conduct], *Vyavahara Dharma* [Civil and Criminal Law enforceable by the State] and *Rajadharma* [Constitutional Law, according to which the Rulers should rule a State].

The essence of Dharma common to all human beings is declared in various works. The Mahabharata puts it under nine heads:-

अक्रोधः सत्यवचनं संविभागः क्षमा तथा ।
प्रजनः स्वेषु दारेषु शौचमद्रोह एव च ॥
आर्जवं भृत्यभरणं नवैते सार्ववर्णिकाः ।

"Truthfulness, to be free from anger, sharing wealth with others [Samvibhaga], forgiveness, procreation of children from one's wife alone, purity, absence of enmity, straightforwardness, and maintaining persons dependent on oneself are the nine rules of Dharma of persons belonging to all the Varnas".

A reading of each one of the rules at once makes an individual realise what he should do and what he should not do. The observance of the above rules alone secures real happiness and harmony in life.

Manu Smriti is more concise and it has brought Dharma under five heads :

अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः ।
एतं सामासिकं धर्मं चातुर्वर्ण्येऽब्रवीन्मनुः ॥

"Ahimsa, [non-violence], Satya [truthfulness], Asteya [not acquiring illegitimate wealth], Shoucham [purity], and Indriyanigraha [control of senses] are in brief the common Dharma for all the Varnas.

RIGHT TO EQUALITY AND HAPPINESS

One of the basic human rights declared as part of Dharma has been the right to happiness, which is the mark of distinction of "Bharatiya Values" of human rights in addition to the right to equality. This ideal is expressed in the following verse:

सहनाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं
करवावहै । तेजस्विनावधीतमस्तु । मा
विद्विषावहै ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ।

May God protect all of us
May we share the food together
May we work conjointly
with great energy
Let there be peace, peace, peace.

(Taittiriya Upanishad- Ch-II, Lesson - 8)

Another popular prayer reads:-

सर्वेऽपि सुखिनः सन्तु सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चित्दुःखभाग् भवेत् ॥

All should be happy.
Let all be free from diseases
Let all see auspicious things
Let nobody suffer from grief.

It is also found expressed in the popular Prayer: *"Loka Samastha Sukhinobhavanthu"*, which is recited every day in every temple.

Apart from these prayers, as part of Raja Dharma, there has been a declaration to the effect that it is the duty of the ruler to secure happiness to all.

प्रजासुखे सुखं राजः प्रजानां च हिते हितम् ।
नात्मप्रियं हितं राजः प्रजानां तु प्रियं हितम् ॥
तस्मान्नित्योत्थितो राजा कुर्यादर्थानुशासनम् ।
अर्थस्य मूलमुत्थानमनर्थस्य विपर्ययः ॥

In the happiness of his subjects lies the Ruler's happiness, in their welfare, his welfare; whatever pleases himself the Ruler shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects, the Ruler shall consider as good.

Charter of equality *[Samanata]* is found incorporated in the Rigveda, the most ancient of the Vedas, and also in the Atharvanaveda. *Rigveda - Mandala* 5, *Sukta* - 60, *Mantra* - 5 :

अज्येष्ठासो अकनिष्ठास एते
सं भ्रातरो वावृधुः सौभगाय ॥

No one is superior [ajyesta-saha] or inferior [akanishta-saha]. All are brothers [ete bhrataraha]. All should strive for the interest of all and should progress collectively [sowbha-gaya sam va vridhuhu].

The first article of universal declaration of human rights made on 10th December 1948 is exactly the same.

सङ्गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।

Oh human beings, all of you should live together with mutual co-operation, converse with each other in a friendly manner. Acquire knowledge having common ideals of life.

समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानी समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम् ।

All your prayer and desires be similar and for common good. All your get-togethers be without separatist feeling. All of you be united in thought, word and deed.

समानी व आकूतिः समान हृदयानि वः ।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति ॥

Let there be oneness in your resolutions, hearts and minds. Let the strength to live with

mutual co-operation be firm in you all. (Rigveda-Mandala-10, Sukta-191, Mantra-4).

Atharvanaveda - Samjnanai sukta :

समानी प्रपा सह वोन्नभागः ।
समाने योक्त्रे सह वो युनज्मि ।
आराः नाभिमिवाभितः ॥

All have equal rights in articles of food and water (Natural Resources). The yoke of the chariot of life is placed equally on the shoulders of all. All should live together with harmony supporting one another like the spokes of a wheel of the chariot connecting its rim and the humb.

FOUR PURUSHARTHAS : IDEALS OF LIFE AND DOCTRINE OF TRIVARGA

The Vedas formed the primordial source of Dharma which incorporated certain basic rules. They were developed further in the *Smritis* and *Puranas.* The four basic ideals which were laid down to secure happiness were: *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha.* As *Moksha* pertains to other world, the doctrine of Trivarga *(Trivarga Siddantha)* comprising of "DHARMA", "ARTHA" and "KAMA", was laid down which is intended to strike a reasonable balance between the interests of an individual and the public interest which means the interests of all other individuals who constitute the society or Nation concerned and includes the entire humanity.

धर्मार्थावुच्यते श्रेयः कामार्थौ धर्म एव च ।
अर्थ एवेह वा श्रेयस्त्रिवर्ग इति तु स्थितिः ॥
परित्यजेदर्थकामौ यौ स्यातां धर्मवर्जितौ ।

Manu 11 224 & IV. 176

To achieve welfare and happiness, some declare Dharma and Artha are good. Others declare that Artha and Kama are better. Still others declare that Dharma is the best. There are also persons who declare Artha alone secures happiness.

But the correct view is that the aggregate of Dharma, Artha and Kama (Trivarga) secures welfare and happiness.

However, the desire [Kama] and material wealth (Artha) must be rejected if contrary to Dharma.

In this single verse *Manu Smriti* has considered the merits of pure materialism (*Artha* and *Kama*) and of mere spiritualism (*Dharma* without *Artha*) and concluded that it is the combination of *Dharma, Artha* and *Kama* which secures welfare and happiness with an overriding principle that desire [*kama*] and material

wealth [*artha*] should be rejected if they are inconsistent with *Dharma* and calls this doctrine TRIVARGA. There can be no better rule or philosophy than *Trivarga*, for the welfare of the individual and society. It strikes a harmonious balance between the interests of the individual and society.

It is significant to note that out of the four *purusharthas*, the Doctrine of *Trivarga* deals with the first three namely *Dharma, Artha* and *Kama*. From this it is clear that if one conforms to *Dharma* in the matter of *Artha* and *Kama*, the *Moksha* would follow. That is why *Dharma* is regarded as ensuring happiness in the world and also leads to eternal peace. This aspect was explained by Madhwacharya, the founding Acharya of the Vijayanagar Empire thus :

अभ्युदय-निःश्रेयसे साधनत्वेन धारयति -
इति धर्मः ।

"Dharma is that which secures happiness in this world as also eternal bliss (Moksha).

"Dharma" was given the pride of place as it constituted controlling factor in all spheres of human activity. The *Mahanarayana Upanishad* declared thus :

धर्मो विश्वस्य जगतः प्रतिष्ठा ।
लोके धर्मिष्ठ प्रजा उपसर्पन्ति ।
धर्मेण पापमपनुदति ।
धर्मे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
तस्माद्धर्मं परमं वदन्ति ।।

The entire Universe stands on Dharma. The people respect only a Dharmishta. Every thing in this world stands on "Dharma". Dharma destroys sinful thoughts. Therefore, Dharma is supreme. (Sec. 79-7)

This declaration indicates that if the sense Dharma is inculcated in the hearts of individuals, it prevents them from committing offences.

FOUR PIOUS OBLIGATIONS

M. B. Adi. 120. 17-20.

For the purpose of effectively implementing the four *Purusharthas*, four pious obligations required to be discharged by all individuals were laid down. They were:

ऋणैश्चतुर्भिः संयुक्ता जायन्ते मानवा भुवि ।
पितृदेवर्षिमनुजैर्देयं तेभ्यश्च धर्मतः ।।
यज्ञैस्तु देवान् प्रीणाति स्वाध्यायतपसा मुनीन् ।
पुत्रैः श्राद्धैः पितृश्चापि आनृशंस्येन मानवान् ।।

1. **Devaruna** (Duty towards God).
2. **Pitruruna:** (Duty towards ancestors)
3. **Rishiruna** (Duty towards Sages)
4. **Manavaruna** (Duty towards humanity)

It may be seen at once, these are very comprehensive and all these flow from a sense of **"GRATITUDE"** *(Kritajnata)*

which is the very foundation of Vedic philosophy. With a sense of gratitude every individual was required to discharge *Devaruna* by worshipping God for having given the human life and for providing natural resources, and *Pitruruna* by leading an honest and purposeful married life, begetting children, educating them and leave them as an asset to the Society, and looking after parents in their old age. *Rishiruna* was required to be discharged by acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, and *Manavaruna* by rendering all types of service to human beings as we secure all our comforts and necessities of life from other individuals.

Discharge of *Devaruna* by worshipping God with a sense of gratitude became an important obligation. The various kinds of rituals, temple worship, family deity or daily worship in house were founded so as to remind every individual about the existence of God, and create a sense of fear of God or moral fear which would act as an internal check, against committing wrongs. It is indisputable that this arrangement has worked excellently and has protected "Dharma" for the last thousands of years and even now continues to be the bedrock of Hindu culture.

Another mark of great distinction of Dharmic duty is that it does not prescribe the worship of God in a single name or in a stereotyped method. Following of any religion or mode of worship falls within the ambit of *Dharma.* This aspect is found incorporated in the following verse:

आकाशात्पतितं तोयं यथा गच्छति सागरम् ।
सर्वदेवनमस्कारः केशवं प्रति गच्छति ॥

Just as the rain falling on the different parts of the earth reaches the ocean, worship of God in any name, destination is the same.

Further, as part of Raja Dharma a rule was :

Narada Smriti vide Dharmokosha P-870 laid down thus:

पाषण्डनैगमश्रेणीपूगव्रात गणादिषु ।
संरक्षेत्समयं राजा दुर्गे जनपदे तथा ॥

The King should give same amount of protection to dis-believers in Vedas as is given to the believers in Vedas.

Such is the broad outlook of Vedic Philosophy. It is for this reason, that in the entire history of India no Hindu king persecuted any class of citizen on the ground of religion. This is also the reason for adopting Secularism as one of the basic elements of our Constitution.

DUTY BASED SOCIETY

By laying down these four pious obligations, a duty based society was sought to be created. The only right given

to every individual was the right to perform his duty. This distinctive feature of this land has been alluded to in the *Vishnupurana* thus :

> अत्रापि भारतं श्रेष्ठं जम्बूद्वीपे महामुने ।
> यतो हि कर्मभूरेषा ततोऽन्या भोगभूमयः ॥

> *Among the countries of the world, Bharat is great because it is the land of duty in contradistinction to the lands of enjoyment.*

Mahatma Gandhiji laid great stress on this aspect of the matter and has stated so in the first page of his book "My Picture of Free India". In fact, this is also the sum and substance of the Bhagvadgita incorporated in the short statement: " कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते । -

"Your right is to perform your duty"

This was the unique method adopted for ensuring the fulfilment of right to happiness of all the individuals for the reason "duty" generates selflessness whereas right emanates from selfishness. Unfortunately, under our Constitution founded in 1949, stress was laid on rights and not duties which is responsible for several problems.

Four Ashramas or Periods of life for human excellence :

It is quite natural that all the four pious obligations cannot be discharged by an individual all the time. Therefore, the four *ashramas* or periods of life were prescribed for effective discharge of these obligations in such a manner as was possible. While worshipping God was to be throughout the life, special attention was to be given to some of them during different periods of life. They are :

1. Brahmacharya : - (Period of Studentship) : After the child had its primary education, from the age of about nine or ten, the child was required to acquire knowledge including mental and physical fitness, observing celibacy, developing good character as also the quality of determination in completing any work undertaken. In otherwords, an individual was required to acquire intellectual, physical and moral strength as also resoluteness, so as to enable him to discharge the other obligations of life.

2. Grihasthahrama (Family life):- After the period of studentship, every individual was required to enter family life. During this period, which happens to be the longest period in life with onerous duties, an individual had to discharge the family and social responsibilities, leading a purposeful, honest and simple life. The ideal to be followed during this period was the Doctrine of *Trivarga*, i.e., acquiring of wealth and fulfilling the desires in conformity with Dharma and maintaining dependents in the family, sharing the wealth

with others who are helpful to him in the matter of acquiring wealth or earning income and contributing money to those who are rendering service to the society or to any other good cause and rendering service to the society through his profession or avocation.

3. Vanaprasthashrama : (Period after retirement from economic activity) During this period, say, after 60 years or so, an individual was required to give up economic / earning activity and to give more attention for rendering service to the society in any field of his choice.

The above method was prescribed so as to enable an individual to lead a purposeful life so that at the fag end of his life, he will feel satisfied that he had discharged the obligations, which were required to be discharged by him. These arrangements are applicable to all irrespective of Varna or class or Caste to which an individual belongs (*Hindu Dharma - The Universal Way of Life* - Paramacharya of Kanchi, P-42).

Even at present time, the aforesaid three periods of life with necessary adoption is relevant, if life is to be fruitful.

4. Sanyasa : This is a special provision for certain individuals only unlike the first three periods which are essential for every individual. It is quite natural that all individuals could not or are not required or could become Sanyasis. It was only for a few who are determined to devote their entire life in the service of humanity. It could be undertaken by a few individuals from the stage of Brahmacharya for the whole life or at any stage of life or after the family life. It is in view of this, in this country we have a galaxy of Sanyasis who have devoted their entire life for the welfare of the Nation. To quote a few : Adi Shankara, Ramanuja, Madhwacharya, and in recent times Swami Vivekananada, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Dayananda Saraswathi, Swami Shraddhananda, Narayana Guru, Bhakti Vedanta Swamy, the founder of ISKCON, etc. It is needless to say about their enormous contribution for cultural renaissance.

DHARMA PREVENTIVE - LAW ENFORCEMENT PUNITIVE

As indicated in the *Mahanarayana Upanishad* the sense of Dharma when inculcated in an individual has the capacity of destroying sinful thoughts whenever it attacks or occurs in the mind and prevent him from committing wrongs. It is preventive in nature. It is comparable to Triple antigen administered into the body of a child which prevents three major diseases. Dharma is sextuple antigen for the mind, as it destroys sinful thoughts which arise out of six enemies inherent in man viz, *Kama* [love], *Krodha* [anger], *Moha* [passion], *Lobha* [greed], *Mada*

[Infatuation], and *Matsarya* [jealousy]. Thus, Dharma like health services is **PREVENTIVE** in nature.

As far as enforcement of law through Police and Courts is concerned, it is punitive in nature and swings into action after the wrong or offence is committed. This is no doubt necessary and useful, provided Dharma-abiding people are substantial, and wrong doers are a few. But if wrong doers are substantial as appears to be the present situation, enforcement machinery cannot meet the situation.

Therefore, it is essential, that every step should be taken to inculcate the sense of Dharma in every individual, in the family, in the schools, and in every other possible method.

DHARMA : PANACEA FOR ALL HUMAN PROBLEMS

As to how the Vedic Vision which resulted in the formulation of rules of Dharma constitutes the panacea for the burning problems humanity is facing, I am giving a few examples:-

I. SOCIAL PROBLEMS:-

(1) Crimes against women :

It is a matter of common knowledge as also discernible from Police records that offences against women in particular, the crime of rape has increased and is increasing. Does the Police and Courts constitute the remedy? Certainly not. For, firstly, the so called remedy begins after the irreparable damage has been done to the woman concerned. Secondly, it has been brought out at human rights seminars that more than 80 percent of the rape cases are not brought before the Courts because the trial in rape cases is found to be worse than the rape itself, in view of the mental torture and adverse publicity it involves.

According to National Human Rights Commission sources, there are about 46000 rape cases pending before the Courts. It is only 20 percent of incidents of rape. Imagine the gravity. The males who commit such heinous offence are the worst criminals. Humanity cannot afford to allow such a situation to continue and even to aggravate. Preventive measures can come from Dharma alone. Inculcating the value based on Dharma that every woman is as sacred as one's own mother from childhood in every male child and that it is the duty of every male to respect and protect every woman, which is one of the most cherished Vedic values, can only effectively prevent this evil and protect humanity against this evil.

(2) Breaking of families :

This is another burning problem which is resulting in millions of children becoming orphans, though their parents are alive, because they are estranged or divorced. The cause for this in many cases is the

throwaway attitude, instead of sense of a gratitude as between each other, lack of sense of joint responsibility and duty to the upbringing of their children, educating them and leaving them as an asset to the human society and not to allow them to become a liability by becoming alcohol and drug addicts, with criminal propensity. In many cases, spouses are changed just as a old motor vehicle or as any old article is changed for the new one. This problem has become extremely grave in America where about 40 percent of the children don't know their father and millions have become orphans and it is observed that if the same state of affairs continues, America will be committing cultural suicide. Other countries have not remained and cannot remain isolated. What is the remedy for this? Again the answer is available in the Dharma of Husband and Wife, which is expressed in an inimitable style in *Manu Smriti* thus:-

अन्योन्यस्याव्यभिचारो भवेदामरणान्तिकः ।
एष धर्मः समासेन ज्ञेयः स्त्रीपुंसयोः परः ॥

Mutual fidelity and love is the Dharma to be observed by husband and wife throughout their life.

Marriage bond does not admit of the status of probation or temporary. It is only permanent, and that too without retirement age. The reason is, that it is the joint responsibility of husband and wife to discharge all the four pious obligations. This value should be inculcated in boys and girls as part of education for, except family there is no other source of supply of good citizen to any society .

(3) Industrial Dispute :

It is also a matter of common knowledge that the disputes between employers and employees have resulted in collosal loss to the Nation. The two important factors which have contributed to such disputes are :

(A) The greed of the employers to apporpriate major portion of earnings for themselves for leading an extravagant life.

(B) The reaction of the employees to such an attitude coupled with lack of honesty, duty-mindedness and sense of gratitude among them.

In this regard, Vedic directives are :

मोघमन्नं विन्दते अप्रचेताः सत्यं ब्रवीमि वध इत्स तस्य ।
नार्यमणं पुष्यति नो सखायं केवलाघो भवति केवलादी ॥

Earning food / wealth is futile in respect of one who has no mind to share it with others. He nourishes neither gods nor friends. One who himself eats without giving to others becomes wholly sinful. (Rigveda X - 117 -6)

शतहस्त समाहर सहस्रहस्त संकिर ।
कृतस्य कार्यस्य चेह स्फातिं समावह ॥

O man, procure wealth with one hundred hands and distribute it with one thousand hands. Thus you attain satisfaction of the work done. [Atharvana Veda 3-24-5]

One of the rules of Dharma alluded to in the Mahabharata is "Samvibhaga" which means sharing the wealth with others. If this rule of Dharma were to be followed by the employer and they give reasonable share of income to the employees, and the employees follow their Dharma of doing their work sincerely and honestly, scope for industrial disputes would be very much reduced.

(4) Misuse of Professional Competence :

Misuse of professional knowledge and competence in all professions including noble and service oriented professions is one of the ills afflicting human society today. For this, the remedy is the Doctrine of *Trivarga* which injuncts not to acquire wealth or fulfil desires in violation of Dharma and pious obligation of *Manavaruna* of rendering service to the society. If these directives are followed by majority of individuals, there will be no social problems and economic problems.

(5) Social Security :

One of the rules of "Dharma" set out in the *Mahabharata* was "Bhrityubharanam" i.e., the duty to maintain dependents / non-earning members of the family. It was the dharma of an earning member of a family to maintain and look after aged parents, unemployed, physically and mentally handicapped members of the family, widows, etc.

This again is in contradistinction to the western civilization in which non-earning members including parents are considered as an economic burden and they have to seek maintainance from the State. Unfortunately, on account of the throw away attitude, old parents are being sent to *Vridhashramas* which is most reprehensible.

Dharma-abiding individual would consider it disgraceful and shameful to allow any of his dependents to beg before the State for maintenance or to send them to *Vridhashramas* or old-age homes.

(6) Menace of AIDS :

Humanity is now faced with the menace of the dreaded disease of AIDS. A person suffering from AIDS becomes an untouchable even to the spouse, children, parents and close relatives and friends. It is worse than death. The number of persons who have become victims of AIDS is alarming. The cause of this is identified as

mainly indulgence in immoral sex. See how our Governmenet is facing this problem. There are huge hoardings put up by the Government to the effect "Use condoms avoid AIDS". This is the scientific remedy! Is it not disgraceful and shameful. Is it not an encouragement to immoral sex? Values of Dharma on the other hand tells 'Don't indulge in immoral sex'. This will not merely act as a preventive for AIDS but also prevents moral degradation of an individual. Therefore, the appropriate course is to educate people against indulging in immoral sex. The hoardings and warning should be "Don't indulge in immoral sex to avoid AIDS".

II. POLLUTION OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEPLETION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Now there has been a cry the world over about over-exploitation of Natural resources and severe pollution of environment i.e., of water and air which is causing injury to human and animal life, and this is being done in utter disregard of inter generational obligation to leave the earth in the same position in which we inherited, for the benefit of the future generation.

The ideal that all living beings should be regarded as one's own self *(Atmavatsarvabhutanam)* had resulted in the formulation of guidelines for protecting plant and animal life and not causing pollution of water sources. Some of them are:-

(i) Protection of Plants and Trees :

वनस्पते शतवल्शो विरोह
सहस्रवल्शा विनयं रुहेम ।

"O Vanaspati, grow with hundred branches. May we enable you to grow in thousand branches". (Rigveda-3-8-11)

(ii) Wildlife should be loved as children :

मृगोष्ट्रखरमार्जाररसरीसृप्खगमक्षिकाः ।
आत्मनः पुत्रवत् पश्येत तैरषामन्तरं कियत् ॥

"Deer, camel, donkey, reptiles, birds and flies be considered as one's own children. There is no reason to differentiate them from one's own children [Bhagavata-7-14-9].

(iii) Water sources should not be polluted :

नाप्सु मूत्रं पुरोपं वाष्ठोवनं वा समुत्सृजेन् ।
प्रमेध्यलिसमन्यद्घा लोहितं वा विपाणि वा ।

"One should not drop urine, stool, cough in the water. Anything which is mixed with these objects, blood and poison should not be thrown into water" (Manu Smriti - 4 - 56]

Now it is a matter of common knowledge that how merciless and illegal killing of animals, and felling of trees, pollution of water and natural resources are being indulged in by greedy industrialists and businessmen, which is causing environmental imbalance and pollution of water and air. The injunction of "Dharma" not to indulge in such activities which are injurious to human, animal and plant life alone can check this evil.

III. ECONOMIC PROBLEM

As far as the economic problem is concerned, the message found in the *Isavasyopanishad* is relevant. The message is that natural resources created by God is meant for the use of all living beings, not merely human beings and for all times to come and therefore, every one should make minimum use of natural resources, which is the foundation of the ideal of living a simple life in this land. Further, it directs not to snatch the wealth belonging to others i.e., not to acquire illegitimate wealth.

A significant message is available from the life of Adi Shankaracharya who received an alm of a dry amla fruit from a poor lady, refused to receive alms from a rich hoarder remarking that it was the case of *papa sangraha*. For this reason, the life style to be followed in this land from times immemorial has been that every one should lead a very simple and inexpensive life. But, unfortunately, under the influence of western materialistic ideas, now there is no end to the desires of man for material benefits. In other words, Hindu way of life is need-based as distinct from western way of life which is greed-based and which results in over exploitation of natural resources.

For example : in order to maintain physical fitness our ancestors interalia prescribed Yoga. Maharshi Patanjali wrote *Yoga Sutra.* It is well known that performing Yoga for half an hour or one hour daily imparts excellent mental and physical fitness but costs nothing. As against this, take the example of Gym. It is also intended to maintain physical fitness, but one has to spend huge money and materials.

Vedic Wisdom is that in every field of life, simplicity and inexpensiveness is the watchword flowing from Dharma, probably the only solution to the economic problems arising out of extravagance and consumerism.

IV. POLITICAL PROBLEMS

Today it is well known that rampant corruption, misappropriation of public funds has become the order of the day. The entire Nation is suffering on account of this evil. Regarding this problem also Raja Dharma had laid down what should be the attitude towards the exercise of political

powers. In this behalf, *Atrisamhita* states thus :

> दुष्टस्य दण्डः सुजनस्य पूजा न्यायेन कोषस्य च संप्रवृद्धिः ।
> अपक्षपातोऽर्थिषु राष्ट्ररक्षा पञ्चैव यज्ञाः कथिता नृपाणाम् ॥

> *"To punish the wicked, to honour (protect) the good, to enrich the treasury (exchequer) by just methods, to be impartial towards the litigants and to protect the kingdom - these are the five yajnas (selfless duties) to be performed by a king [Atri-28)*

What is of great importance to be noted is that apart from laying down the five fundamental duties to be performed by rulers, it was also laid down that they should be discharged in a selfless manner. Sri. K.M. Panikkar, an eminent thinker and one of the the great personalites of Kerala in his book entitled "Ideas of Sovereignty in Ancient India " opines that the coronation of a King was a *Diksha,* a dedication, and a king bearing the crown became a *Vrati* i.e., a person devoting his life to a cause namely selfless service to the people.

From the Ramayana, it is discernible that Rama had cautioned Bharata that in the period of 14 years during which he was required to rule, he must conform to Dharma as otherwise the Ruler as well as the State would be destroyed. (*Sitayana,* P-136).

The Mahabharata declared this in one line :

> धर्माय राजा भवति न कामकरणाय तु ।

Shanti Parva, Verse 3(1), Chapter - 90.

> *The power of the rulers is meant for administering the State in accordance with law and not for enjoying the luxuries of life.*

Brihaspati, a great exponent of Rajadharma, declared thus:-

> नीतेः फलं धर्मार्थकामावाप्तिः ॥

Barhaspatya Sutra 11-43

> *The Polity is meant to ensure that Artha and Kama are fulfilled subject to Dharma".*

Therefore, the same Doctrine of *Trivarga* which was applicable to all was made mandatory for Rulers also. It holds good for all times and for all types of Government.

Our great rulers who took over the reign of the country after independence discarded 'Dharma' from *Trivarga* and made it *"Dwivarga"* doctrine i.e.; *Artha*

and *Kama* as the goal of polity and declared that economic prosperity aided by political power would lead to the fulfilment of desires and secure happiness. "Dharma" was condemned as anti-secular by translating "secularism" which means respect for all religions, wrongly as *Dharma Nirapekshata* (a state bereft of Dharma) and consequently moral education based on values of life found in the Vedas, Upanishads, the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, etc, which did not pertain to any religion were discarded. The fundamental principle of the "Raja Dharma" that the Rulers should discharge their power with a sense of duty and in a selfless manner was given a go bye and becoming a minister came to be regarded as an excellent opportunity to make money, foreign tours and to enjoy all luxuries of life. This is the root cause for the present state of the Nation.

Thus, it may be seen that the only remedy for rampant corruption and mis-appropriation of public funds, which is afflicting our Nation, is to fall back on Raja Dharma, and the rulers have to change their attitude towards the political power. It is this internal check which will be more effective than CBI and Courts.

Therefore, looked from any angle, and in respect of any problem, the Vedic Wisdom formulated in the form of "Dharma" is the only panacea for all the ills afflicting humanity. It is for this reason, Arnold Toynbee in his Introduction to the Life of Ramakrishna has stated thus :-

> *"Today we are still living in this transitional chapter of the World's history, but it is already becoming clear that a chapter which had a Western beginning will have to have an Indian ending if it is not to end in self-destruction of human race... At this supremely dangerous moment in human history, the only way of salvation for mankind is an Indian way".*

It is also appropriate to recall the words of caution uttered by Swami Vivekananda. He said :

> *Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct, all moral perfection will be extinct, all sweet-souled sympathy for religion will be extinct, all ideality will be extinct, and in its place will reign the duality of lust and luxury as the male and female deities, with money as its priest, fraud, force and competition as its ceremonies, and the human soul as its sacrifice".*

The word 'India' here personifies "Dharma". Swami Vivekananda warned that if Dharma is discarded, that will lead to serious consequences. Therefore, in order to save humanity including our own Nation from such a danger, we must resurrect the values of life flowing from Vedic message in this land and also spread the message to the entire world.

To put it in a nut-shell, the CULTURAL POLLUTION which is afflicting humanity in view of the western, purely materialistic, selfish, greed-based ideas must be replaced by Vedic values in the form of Dharma to save humanity. In this regard, the words of Vivekananda have become most relevant. He said:

"Where are the men ready to go out to every country in the world with the messages of the great sages of India? Where are the men who are ready to sacrifice everything, so that this message shall reach every corner of the World? Such heroic souls are wanted to help the spread of truth. Such heroic workers are wanted to go abroad and help to disseminate the great truths of the Vedanta.

The world wants it, without it the world will be destroyed. The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst tomorrow, go to pieces tomorrow. They have searched every corner of the world and have found no respite. They have drunk deep of the cup of pleasure and found it vanity. Now is the time to work so that India's spiritual ideas may penetrate deep into the West". (India and her problems -PP 95-96)

If Dharma is given up, those would be the consequences we are already witnessing in the emergence of a dangerous situation.

That is why our ancestors had given the slogan *Krinvanto Vishwamaryam* - **"WE SHALL CIVILIZE THE ENTIRE WORLD".** Swami Vivekananda declared a century ago that the role assigned to Bharat was to spread the message of love, service and sacrifice. He inspired us by his words "Arise, Awake and stop not till the goal is reached". We are therefore under an obligation to spread the Vedic Message to the entire humanity .

If we were to act with determination to achieve the said goal, no one can prevent us from achieving it as the great poet Kalidasa has declared :

KA IPSITARTAHA STHIRANISCHAYAM MANAHA
PAYASCHA NIMNABHIMUKHAM PRATIPAYET

"Who can make, the mountain torrent rushing down, and the mind determined to achieve its goal, retreat? None.

With these words, I inaugurate this Seminar and pray almighty to bless success to the objectives of the Seminar.

YATHODHARMASTATHO JAYAHA

■

After the Parliament of Religions of Chicago in 1893, many interfaith and interreligious councils evolved in many cities in the USA and Canada. The different religions are slowly learning to hold out hands of friendship to each other in every part of the world. Most of the Swamis in America are involved with these interfaith groups to promote mutual understanding and harmony. Comparative religion is in the curriculum in many schools and universities in America. This helps to develop a fairer attitude towards other religions. Vivekananda's catholic approach towards religions directly and indirectly influenced many thinkers of the western world. Swamiji spoke of the secret of harmony in the final session of the Parliament : A seed becomes a plant by assimilating the earth, air, and water, without becoming earth, air and water. Similarly each person can assimilate the spirit of others and yet preserve his individuality and grow according to his own law of growth.

Variety must continue to exist. It is the law of creation. Perfect balance or perfect harmony means dissolution. In the symphony of religions, each religion has its own place, and each is playing its own role. In the Chicago parliament, each representative was busy representing his or her own faith, but Swamiji spoke on behalf of all religions. The universal religion has no location in time and space. Its ambit is infinite. Krishna, Buddha, Zarathushtra, Confucius, Christ, Moses, Muhammed, Nanak, Ramakrishna - all have honoured places in it. The real universal religion is not a creed or a doctrine; it is an experience. It is God-consciousness, which runs through all faiths. It is the melting pot of diversity. Vivekananda preached this universal religion in the West as well as in the East.

– ***Swami Chetanananda***

The Vedanta Kesari

VEDIC REFLECTIONS

Prof. P.K.K. RAJA

Mother India may legitimately feel proud that modern researches in the West by scholars have revolutionized the old derogatory concepts generally held on the Vedas, and on the History of India, and now have started regarding the Vedas as perfectly scientific. Modern Science strives to reach at the ancientmost Vedas.

The age of the Vedas has now been pushed back to 12,000 B.C. on grounds of certain Astronomical facts boldly pronounced in the Vedas which were until recently held as superstitious nonsense, but of late, proved accurate and true. These facts are related to the equinoxial position of the Sun in the Zodiac as well as to the discovery of a different Polestar `Vegas' mentioned as Abhijith in the Vedas. The latest cosmological findings of millions of universes in our cosmos also attest to the fact of the scientific accuracy of the Vedic pronouncements on the subject. Thus India at present is boldly acclaimed as the cradle of all world civilisations.

Another significant revolutionary fact is that there never was any Aryan Invasion of India. The original home of the people who sang the Vedas was our Bharath herself. The Indus Valley Civilization was just the last phase of the ancientmost Saraswathy Valley Vedic civilization. The Aryan-Dravidian Divide has been found to be an imperialistic concoction to discredit the ancientmost vedic culture and also to bring down the antiquity of Indian civilization.

The modern discoveries in every branch of human wisdom and knowledge, particularly in every branch of Science are all clearly found directly or symbolically stated in the Vedas - derided hitherto as nonsensical blabberings of cattlegrazers. The Big Bang and the Big Crunch concepts of modern cosmology, the intermediate evolution of millions and millions of universes out of the primeval plasma i.e. Ādyaśakti, the *Nadasphota*, the masculine mobile trait and the feminine stable trait in every living body. The most basic triple or Triunal Qualities on which the whole of mankind may be classified are carebrotonic or intellectual, viscerotonic or rational and somatotonic or emotional - vividly and categorically enumerated as *Sattwa, Rajo* and *Tamo Gunas* in the Vedas.

Over and above all these distinctly evidently scientific basis of our Vedas, what makes the same admirably different from other non-Vedic, non-Indian civilization is the message of cooperation, harmony and integration of all diversities into unity, instead of imposed uniformity and also the continuity and survival of Vedic civilisation. The invaders after the invasion, were fraternally received and were provided with all comforts and freedom to settle down in India. The overwhelmingly majority Hindu Religion was not imposed on the newly settled people. They were given all freedom and facilities to build their prayer houses. This uniquely tolerant spirit was, in spite of the fact, that Hindu religious shrines were wantonly destroyed or desecrated by the outsiders and Vedic religion was subjected to all sorts of ridicule. It is this spirit of tolerance, harmony and cooperation that raises Vedic religion as a uniquely great religion.

The historical civilizations outside India which were in all aspects, rooted in arms might, including credal religions, have already disappeared or are disappearing due to fratricidal conflicts and wars. The history of the world outside India has been uniformly one of mutually fratricidal wars. India has maintained peace amid diversities. This has been due to the wisdom imparted by the Vedic seers. These wise seers systematised a dual pointed social system of individual perfection and social harmony, taking into consideration the basic three qualities or *Gunas* mentioned above. Thus an individual has to imbibe restraint and humility in his Brahmacharya Ashram, and then enter into Grihastha Ashram to enjoy Artha and Kama on Dharmic lines and then, on fulfilment of material life enjoyments, retire to the Vanaprastha Ashram to meditate on the subtle and causal aspects of the gross life. There the individual attains the Absolute Truth and renounces the external features to enter into Sanyasa Ashrama to attain the final Mukti i.e. absolute merger with the Absolute Truth i.e. Brahman. In the Brahmacharya Ashrama the individual is just a Sudra subjected to commands from parents and Guru to learn and master the disciplines. The individual gets rooted in Satya, Dharma and Bhakti. Thereon he enters into Grihasthasrama, he enjoys life as Vaisya and Kshatriya. This is the Karmakanda. And then he retires to Upasana Kanda of deep meditation as Sannyasi with Brahmin virtues. The fourfold varnas is designed to attain harmony in the society granting all the comforts and rights of all the sections of the community. In short, it is this social system of harmony that enabled the Vedic civilization to survive all onslaughts and gain the respect of every branch of wisdom as "the acme, the tallest point of human wisdom." ■

THE CONCEPTS OF ṚTAM, SATYAM AND DHARMA

Dr. SHAKUNTALA PUNJANI

The Vedic seers on seeing the Sun and the Moon rising daily at a fixed time; following each other regularly, realized that there is some order in the whole cosmos. They noticed the same order in the nebula - lakhs of light years away from the earth. They discovered that there is order in every activity of nature and they named this cosmic order as Ṛtam (Rg. Veda 4.29.8) Plato calls this Rtam 'The Supreme Law'. The Vedic seers also realized that they could not go beyond the barriers which lay within the human beings. On reaching a particular point, the senses could probe no more, the speech stood silent, the mind quietened. They called this point verily Satyam. The most powerful offshoot of the Vedic Ṛtam and Satyam is the 'Doctrine of Karma'. Nobody can live without action. (Gita 3.5) And this activity demands duty in a right perspective and this verily is Dharma. Ṛtam, Satyam and Dharma are interlinked concepts. (Atharva Veda 9.9.17). Let us peep through these concepts one by one.

ṚTAM

The word Ṛtam is formed with the root R meaning 'to go', hence, the word Ṛtam indicates motion - गति, but this motion is not a hazardous one; certainly the movement is in a perfect order. The term Ṛtam implies that everything from the Akasa to a molecule moves on, this movement is evident in the current of electricity, in the flames of fire, in the flow of rivers and so on. In the Vedas, Rtam means 'the all pervading cosmic order' at whose bidding the countless heavenly bodies race through the firmament, seasons march in order, winds blow in terror and day and night meekly follow each other. Even the polarities of life and death march under the shadow of Rtam; through their shine, the Sun and the Moon pour their immortal rays on earth. It is the Ṛtam that holds all the natural powers together. In the Vedas at many places the words Ṛtam and Satyam are referred together and at many places both these terms appear as synonyms, but the fact is not so as will be clear in the following

description. In the process of creation Rtam is the first born, then came Satyam. Rtam pervades the whole creation and the creation is impossible in the absence of Rtam The same is the case with the individual (यथा पिण्डे तथा ब्रम्हांडे). The individual is not an island of conscious existence. His links with the 'whole' are clear and countless. In the macrocosm Ṛtam takes the form of Kala as no becoming or change is possible outside the sphere of Kala. Kala is Ṛtam incarnate. (Atharva Veda 5.4.1). In the microcosm Rtam resides in the Vijnanamaya and Manomaya sheaths.

Ṛtam is the realm of reactivity. Its central point is action; action and reaction are equal and opposite, therefore all polarities emerge from Rtam. To get over the polarity, the opposition must be resolved. One must learn to look upon life with objectivity and dispassion. Then only one can place himself in a wide cosmic context and be able to see the light of wisdom (अमृतस्य ज्योतिः). He realizes that the immortal Ṛtam that spreads over and beyond the sky is the same that shines with full blaze within the core of our heart.

The urge to know the 'unknown' is Rtam. It comes forth from the very centre of the being. Man's quest of Ṛtam - order - is depicted in art, religion, culture, civilization and science. The products of Rtam i.e. culture and science in turn refine and define into patterns and forms which are the boundless energies of man. The innate urge of science is to know the 'Order in nature'. This 'order' amounts the reduction of whole to genus and species so that we know classes and their characteristics. Scientific process to Aristotle was classification through which we can infer from the knowledge of genus (whole), the knowledge of any species subsumed under the whole. Science has radically changed from classification to causation but its will to order remains strong as ever. Neo-science reveals that no event is uncaused and no event is a miracle. A cause is equal to its effect in quantum and it is radically antecedent to the effect. We may call this 'the law of action and reaction'. A new world-order has emerged from statistics according to which, the universe is made up of variables which on being quantified are measurable through the 'mean' and 'fulcrum'. The point of mean and fulcrum is nothing but 'Ṛtam'.

SATYAM

Rtam - order is not all in all in life. The creative surge of Satyam is the source and the centre of Ṛtam. Satyam is our being. Ṛtam gets its charge and content; its meaning and motivational force from Satyam. The term Satyam is formed with the roots 'As अस् = to be and इ = to go)'. Both the roots indicate motion. True it is

that existence is possible through motion only. It is the nature of mind that it creates polarities. Polarity makes for inner tension and tension induces movement. Each polarity and movement depicts the one underlying fact and that is Satyam.

Whatever conforms to the objective spirit of Rtam is Satyam and whatever does not conform is Anrtam-false-untrue. In the moral context Rtam and Anrtam are virtue and vice. In the working of the cosmos there is no Anrtam. If it exists anywhere it exists in the arbitrary will of man. As Dyuloka is sustained by the Sun from outside, similarly this earth is sustained by Satyam. (Rg Veda 10.85.1)

Satyam is the common truth of all the religions. Truth is The Being from which all the beings are derived. This Being - This Truth is the whole, it is the perfection. The question arises, 'Can the mind grasp the whole.' The answer is in the negative. The mind directly cannot grasp the Reality; but there is certainly a way to reach the Reality and that is 'to be It'. This becoming is not an easy job but it is very difficult like walking on the edge of a razor. One has to follow the disciplined path (साधना), breath-control, postural devices (योगासन) and meditation. To have the vision of Satyam, firm faith is essential. Our sense avoidabilities are limited. We cannot claim that there is nothing more beyond our experience. The region of relativity sets the limit for our realization. Hence, the sage prays to the Lord to open the golden orb of Truth so that he may have a clear vision of the Truth. (*Ishvaasyopanishad* - 15)

This Satyam is Existence, one of the indication of Brahman. This Satyam is always without any hindrance. It can never be negated. The Sruti further proclaims boldly that the knower of Truth himself becomes Brahman. (*Thaithiriyopanishad* 2.1).

The word Satyam is also used as an adjective particularly with speech. Advice to speak the truth forms a part of the convocational address in the Sruti The student is also warned that this truth must not hurt anybody. There is no choice in following the 'path of truth'; it is a compulsion. *Satyavacana* is one of the basic five moral qualities i e. Austerity, Almsgiving, Straight-forwardness, Non-violence and True Speech. One should not even by mistake tell a lie as the untruth leads to severe consequences.

'Satyam' is the moral ideal which guides not only the men but also the gods to the true path. Satyam as a moral quality is glorified in the Sruti in glowing terms. Whatever may be the conditions, it is Satyam only that is victorious in the end

The knowledge of Ṛtam - the cosmic order quickens the mind and charges it

with motivational energy and one reaches the realm of Reality and becomes It. (ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मैव भवति।)

DHARMA

With the concepts of Rtam and Satyam is associated the concept of Dharma. (Atharva Veda 9.9.17). The word Dharma is derived from the root *Dhr* = to hold. Dharma holds the society. It is the law of solidarity. Human society is regarded as a living organism of which each individual constitutes a single which must co-operate towards the well being of the entire organism; this co-operation in a noble cause is termed as Dharma.

It is interesting to note that in the Rigveda the word is in the neuter gender as Dharma and is used as an adjective or a noun. Dharma is generally indicative of religious ceremonies. The word is also used as a masculine form. In the usages, ध्रुवेण धर्मणा and सनूता धर्माणि the word धर्मन् is used in the sense of 'fixed laws'. The gods associated with this concept are Mitra and Varuna who protect the people from the Maya of the demons.

The word Dharma implies religion, custom, practice, duty, order, law, justice, merit, virtue etc. The fact is that the concept of Dharma is impregnated with various meanings which cannot be expressed in any of the other languages. Even the English word 'Religion' depicts a part of it. The nearest word to Dharma is duty कर्तव्य, which includes the duties of an individual towards his family, society, country, and towards the whole universe.

The term Dharma carries the different meanings in different systems of thought. In Buddhism the word धम्मम् in धम्मम् शरणं गच्छामि is the essence of Lord Buddha's teachings. In Buddhist Philosophy the term धम्मम् has altogether two different meanings of cause and effect.

The root of Dharma is the 'Vedas' as is told in the Sruti literature. Manu adds to the list of the meanings of the word Dharma i.e tradition, the behaviour of the knowers of the Vedas, man of austerity and self-satisfaction. He further explains the ten characteristics of Dharma i.e. contentment, forbearance, self-restraint, honesty, calmliness, control over the senses, wisdom, knowledge of the Vedas, truth and the suppression of anger

The concept of Dharma is very significant as it stands first in the four main pursuits of human beings i.e. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksa, even the Purusarthas of Kama and Artha are to be fulfilled with Dharma only. Moreover, Dharma as the principle of self-determination occupies the pivotal position in the scheme of spiritual realization. Dharma is a social virtue, an unconditional and absolute principle to be followed in the fulfilment of all the social

obligations. Social obligations have a basis of ethical values. Thus, Dharma is a virtue, an ethical code.

The concept of Dharma occupies an important place in the Gita. This holy song begins with the word Dharma. The metaphysical, religious and ethical implications of the word Dharma are well-explained at various places in the Gita. Performance of actions without pride and prejudice and without the hope of recompense. (निष्काम) is the best way to fulfill our duties. (Gita 2.47) The Dharma of the Gita is for the betterment of all the beings and for the social construction (सर्वभूतहितम् and लोकसंग्रहं). Even the Lord is a Karmayogin. The ethical concept of Dharma is to recognize one's position in the society and accordingly one performs one's duty. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to fight in the battlefield as it is his duty as a Kśhatriya, otherwise he will incur sin. The characteristics of Dharma are well explained in the Gita particularly in the sixteenth chapter. Even the Varnadharmas are clear here. Sruti also declares the *Ashramadharmas.* Manu tells in detail the *Naimittaka Dharma* and the *Gunadharmas.* Sometimes different virtues are told to be the Dharma. अहिंसा परमो धर्मः, आचारः परमो धर्मः etc.

The Gita lays the highest stress to follow one's own Dharma (duties). It firmly declares death to be the better course than following another's Dharma.

Following the course of one's own Dharma leads to peaceful and happy life full of satisfaction.

It is the *Udghosa* of Indian Culture that victorious is he who follows Dharma - यतो धर्म ततो जयः We Indians hold our heads high as सत्यमेव जयते is engraved in our national emblem which is the proof that our roots are engraved in Dharma.

It may be concluded by saying that science flows from Rtam and philosophy originates from Satyam. These two concepts have bridged the distance between man and nature. Dharma is the principle of 'life' and 'action'; it is a line of conduct to be pursued. At the same time we must not forget that we are the makers of our own destiny. Today there is a great need to understand the sublime Vedic concepts of Ṛtam, Satyam and Dharma in their right perspectives as we have become materialistic in our approach and the world is sitting on the nuclear arsenals. Hence, we must not wait for a new Columbus to arrive but like a new Bhagiratha we must bring the Triveni of Rtam, Satyam and Dharma on the earth. ■



THE PRINCIPAL SENTENCES OF ADVAITA VEDANTA

MAHABALESWAR P. BHAT

अखण्डं सच्चिदानन्दमवाङ्मनसगोचरम् ।
आत्मानमखिलाधाऽमाश्रयेऽभीषृसिद्धये
सदाशिवसमारम्भां शङ्कराचार्यमध्यमाम्
अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपम्पराम् ॥

The Vedas, the immortal revelations, forming the basis of Dharma and Brahman is of four kinds (viz) Rg, Yajur, Sama and Atharvana. They, in turn, are divided further as Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads. The Upanishads, comprising of the hidden secrecies of the entire Vedas are termed as Vedanta, that being literally the end portion of the Vedas.

Just as the fruit issues from the end portion of the trees so also the entire wisdom of the tree of Vedas bloom through the end part of Vedas i.e. Vedanta - The Upanishads.

The word "Anta" means determination. Thus opines Bhasyakara while commenting on the Gita verse *Nāsato Vidyate Bhāvah.* The determination of Vedas is revealed thus through Upanishadic sentences like

"एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म"

The Vedic utterances such as

"सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति" ॥
"नावेदविन्मनुते तं बृहन्तम्" ॥
"सर्वे वेदा यत्रैकं भवन्ति" ॥
तन्त्वौपनिषदं पुरुषम्" ।

The Gita Vākyās like

"ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते" ॥
यावानर्थ उहपाने सर्वतः संपतोदके

and the aphorisms of Bādarāyana (V12)

"शास्त्रयो वित्वात्" "तत्तु समन्वयात्"
"गति सामान्यात्"

वेदानां अन्तः अन्तिमो भागः वेदान्तः

etc. speak of the unique non-dual Brahman.

They all lead to the realisation of *Brahmasākshāthkara.*

Prasthānatraya (threefold systems or streams). The word "Prasthānatraya" is a renowned one speaking of the three-fold streams श्रुतिप्रस्थानं, स्मृतिप्रस्थानं, सूत्रप्रस्थानञ्च

and dealing with the analysis of the true nature of Brahman. The sole authority of the realisation of the true nature of Brahman rests on *Sruti Prasthana* viz. Vedanta or Upanishads. The nondual nectar showering Bhagavadgita, the quintessence of Vedas represents *Smrti Prasthāna.*

The *Sutraprasthana* is in the form of highly condensed Vedantic aphorisms known as *Brahmasutras* of Bādarāyana. He brings out the entire essence of Srutis and Smrtis in his compendium. Thus the *Prasthanatraya*, duly critically analysed and commented upon in detail by the great Acharyas lead the seekers to Moksha, by bestowing upon them, the transcendental consciousness of oneness thereby annihilating *avidya* or *maya.*

THE PRINCIPAL SENTENCES

All Advaita Vedantins, duly endowed with the Upanishadic wisdom, consider the *Mahavakyas* - principal sentences, as the quintessence of Vedas as seeds are to the tree. Each Veda shines with a Jewel of *Mahavakya.* There are four prominent principal sentences pertaining to the four Vedas. They are :

प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म - ऋग्वेदीयम् ।
अहं ब्रह्मास्मि - यजुर्वेदीयम् ।
तत्त्वमसि - सामवेदीयम् ।
अयमात्मा ब्रह्मा - अथर्ववेदीयम् ।

All these sentences speak of the partless, matchless all-pervasive Brahman.

The Principal Sentences - an analysis with regard to the numbers :-

Is it fair on the part of the seekers to think whether there are only four *Mahavakyas* or more? Of course there are hundreds of prominent Vedic utterances such as :

"ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम्" ।
"सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म" ।
"इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा" ।
"एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म" ।

Sri Ramachandra Yati's *Mahavakya-ratnavali* contains more than hundred *Mahavakyas* culled out from the hundred and eight Upanishads. But Vedantins on the whole generally consider the above stated four prominent principal sentences *(Mahavakyas)* as supreme. As Vedas are four in number so also the *Mahavakyas.* The great Vidyaranya too rightly affirmed in his *"Panchadasi"* that the entire wisdom of the Vedas get revealed through these four *Mahavakyas.*

SPECIALITY OF THE MAHAVAKYAS

The *Mahavakya* "Tattvamasi" categorically affirms the unity of Jiva and Brahman *(Jivabrahmaikya).* The *Mahavakya* "Pragnanam Brahma" speaks of the pure consciousness Brahman as is

clear from "Aitareyopanishad". The *Mahavakya* "Ayamātma Brahma" speaks of realising Brahman through inquiry and determination. The *Mahavakya* "Aham Brahmasmi" points out the self realisation through profound contemplation and introspection where mortal sufferings born of "Maya" and "Avidya" stand totally terminated. This *Mahavakya* is "anubhavatmaka". The work *Advaitasiddhi* deals with the two types of Vakyas viz *Upadesha Vakya* and *Anubhava Vakya.* The *Mahavakyas* "Tattvamasi" and "Aham Brahmasmi" are considered as *Upadesha Vakya* and *Anubhava Vakya* respectively.

THE GREATNESS OF THE PRINCIPAL SENTENCES

One may wonder as to how just two or three words would justify the title "Mahavakya". We may put forth a few reasonings in this regard.

The sound pertaining to the Mahavakya does not matter. Sense alone matters. The Vedanta does not rest on abundant words. That alone is considered as a *Mahavakya* which is pregnant with the entire import of the Upanishads, the uttering of which inspires one through self enquiry to self realisation.

Brahman is unique, one without a second, differenceless and indiscernible, through place, time and entity. Hence the *Sruti Vakya Mahato Mahiyan.* The same is dealt with through the *Mahavakyas* "Tattvamasi" and the greatness is justified.

Moksha alone is considered as the supreme value amongst the four fold goals in life *(Purusharthas)* viz. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. Moksha is the ultimate realisation of Brahman, by the Jiva which is evident through the Mahavakya, *Brahmaveda Brahmaiva Bhavati.* The same scale may be applied to the *Mahavakyas* dealing with the realisation of Brahman and the attainment of Moksha such as "Tattvamasi".

For achieving the ultimate goal in life through the unification of Jiva with Brahman, all the Smritis, Puranas, Ithihasas, Kavyas, Nataks etc. act only as guides, catering to the varied states of mind.

THE RENOWNED STATUS OF "TATTVAM ASI"

Tattvam asi is the crown of all *Mahavakyas* which is of initiatory nature. That also forms the nucleus of all sastras. The sastra can be defined thus

प्रवृत्तिर्वा निवृत्तिर्वा नित्येन कृतकेन वा ।
पुंसां ये नोपदिश्येत तच्छास्त्रमभिधीयते ॥

Tattvam asi contains the quintessence of all the sastras. Further, the Vedantins

affirm that the famous Bhagavadgita, comprising of the three-fold six chapters' treatise revolve around this great *Mahavakya, Tattvam asi.* The first fold of six chapters deal with *Tattvam asi,* the second fold of six, deal with "Tat" and the third fold of six deal with "Asi". This is according to the renowned Advaita preceptor Madhusudana Saraswati who comments at the beginning of "Goodhartha Dipika". The learned people opine that the Gayatri Mantra, being adored by the *traivarnikas* has this Mahavakya "Tattvamasi" within. According to the scholars of Ithihasas, the Adikavya, *Ramayana,* composed by the great sage-poet Valmiki has in it an implied purport of "Tattvam asi" with the ultimate goal of visualising Rama as Para Brahman.

वेदवेद्ये परे पुंसि जाते दशरथात्मजे
वेदः प्राचेतसादासीत - साक्षाद्रामायणात्मना ॥ इति ॥

The essence of the Mahabharata too contains the same as is evident through Bhagavadgita which was already dealt with.

The sixth chapter of the Chandogya Upanishad of Sama Veda deals with this *Mahavakya, Tattvam asi* where the nature of Brahman has been dilated upon in detail. Further, the greatness of the *Mahavakyas* is truly felt as a fertile ground of countless research by the researchers.

THE WISDOM OF MAHAVAKYAS - MEANS OF MOKSHA

The goal of the Upanishads is experiencing boundless bliss through the realisation of Brahman. *(Brahmasakshatkara)* and that too, by meditating upon the pithy, meaninful Upanishadic principal sentences such as "Tattvam asi". The "Srutivakya" also corroborates the same thus -

"तमेव विदित्वा अतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था
विद्यतेऽयनाय" इति ॥

The words of Sage Narada also are to be noted here –

"तत्वमस्यादि वाक्योत्थं ज्ञानं मोक्षस्य
साधनम्" इति ॥

The renowned Sureswaracharya also proclaims in Brhadāranya Vārtika as :-

"तत्वमस्यादि वाक्योत्थ सम्यधी जन्ममात्रत ।
अविद्या सहकार्येण नासीदास्ति भविष्यति ॥ इति ॥

It is clear that the Mahavakyas ably enable the seeker to obtain the true knowledge and realisation of Brahman after uprooting the inexplicable ignorance *Avidya* or *Maya* which is the perennial cause of sorrow in this ephemeral existence.

PARTLESS INDIVISIBLE STATE - AN ANALYSIS

The Mahavakyas lead one to the non-dual state of uninterrupted cosmic Brahman consciousness. Citsukhacharya defines *Akhandartha* in his *Tattvapradipika* thus :

"संसर्गेणा संगिस्तम्यग् धीहेतुताया गिरामियम् ।
उक्ताखण्डार्थता यद्वा तत-प्रतिपादिकार्थता ॥" इति ॥

Vasudeva Sastri in his commentory on *Siddhanta Bindu* describes Akhandartha as the initiator cum knower of the pure consciousness Brahman. The work *Kalpataru* defines the *Akhanda* thus -

अवशिष्ट मपर्यायानेकश्वब्दप्रकाशितम् ।
एकं वेदान्त निष्णाता अखण्डं प्रतिपेदिरे" ॥

DELINEATION OF MAHAVAKYARTHA

The oneness of Jiva and Brahman forms the crux of the Mahavakyas such as "Tattvam asi". There is the total non-difference between Jiva and Brahman which is neither united nor separated. The revered Sankaracharya states in his *Vakyavrtti* thus :

"संसर्गो वा विशिष्टो वा वाक्यार्थो नात्र संमता ।
अखण्डैक रसत्वेन वाक्यार्थो विदुषां मतः ॥ इति ॥

Herein Vedantists speak of three *sambandhas* in this regard (viz.) :

a) Samanadhikaranyasambandha

By *Samanadhikaranya,* we mean that there converges, two different entities of different purport in one common plane or form. "This is that Devadatta" is a telling illustration wherein *"That"* refers to the knowledge of the person in the past time, place and the like. "This" refers to the knowledge of the person who is present before you, the speaker at the specific hour, place and the like. Here, in Soyam Devadattah, there arises the *Samanadhikaranyasambandha.* The same logic can be applied to the Vedanta aphorism "Tattvam asi" (That thou art wherein "Tvam" refers to Jivatma and *that* refers to Paramatma and both are correlated through the common plane *Asi,* thereby justifying *Samanadhikaranyasambandha.*

b) Visheshya Visheshabhava Sambandha

This too speaks of oneness of Jiva and Brahma. *Vishesya* is the one to be encompassed and *Vishesana* is the one that encompasses. In the Mahavakya Tattvam asi, just like *Sah Ayam Devadattah* there arises oneness between *TAT* and *TVAM* through *Vishesya Vishesana Sambandha. Sah eva ayam* similars *Tat eva tvam.* One is encompassed by the other and thereby arises oneness.

c) Lakshya Lakshanabhava Sambandha

Lakshana comes to the rescue when there arises redundance in the primary meaning. In the sentences "सोऽयं" "देवदत्त" and "तत्वमसि" there arises its redundance with regard to the sense of the words Sah and Ayam as well as Tat and Tvam considering the different place, time and the like. The redundance is nulled through लक्ष्यलक्षण भावसंबन्ध duly shedding of the primary sense of the above and adhering to the unity or oneness.

THE NONDUALITY THROUGH "SAKTHI"

There is no need to bring the concept of Lakshana with regard to the nondual state of Atman-Brahman congruence. It could be very well achieved through *Sakthi.* It has been arrived at by the Sankaracharya that the *Abheda* or non-different, nondual state comes through Lakshana only. Sakthi comes to the rescue when there arises redundance in the matter of Vishesya duly giving prominence to Vishesana. This is evident through the following nyāya -

> "सविशेषेण हि विधिनिषेधौ विशेषणं
> उपसंक्रामतः सति विशेष्ये बाधे ।" इति ।
> न्यायेन विशेष्यस्य बाधे शक्त्या विशेषणं
> उपस्थितो भवति ।

With this yardstick the prominent principal sentences also get their nondual import through Sakthi. This has been duly established by Dharmarajadhwarin in his *Vedanta Paribhasha,* "He who is static is that Purusha" *(yoyam sthanuh sa puman).* In this example, the non-difference of the static state with the individual comes through Sakthi and the oneness is realised. The same is applicable with respect to oyster shell and silver. It is clear that *Sruti Prasthana,* consisting of Mahavakyas highlights the partless unique nondual state of Brahman.

SMRTI PRASTHANA AND PARTLESS STATE OF BRAHMAN

Smrti Prasthana, following in the footsteps of *Sruti Prasthana* adopts the concept of nondual partless state of that Supreme Brahman. The couplets of the Bhagavadgita are pregnant with the essential purport of the Mahavakyas and as such each and every *sarga* ends with a colophon, confirming it as a Upanishad, "इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु....". The following renowned verse also characterises this as Upanishad.

> "सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः ।
> पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत" ।।इति।।

A few illustrations leaning on the *Mahavakyas* may be cited.

"वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम्"
कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हान्ति कम्"
"क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि माँ विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।"
"ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।"
"अहमात्मा गुड केशः" ।
"ब्रह्मणोऽहं प्रतिष्ठा हं अमृतस्याव्ययस्य च"
शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥
"सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।
ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः" ॥

Thus Bhagavadgita prominently deals with the import of the Mahavakyas showering ambrosia - Nonduality.

SUTRA PRASTHANA LEANS HEAVILY ON MAHAVAKYAS

The Brahma Sutras are nothing but a garland of flowers of Vedanta Vakyas. The Sutras dilate upon Brahman, as a nondual partless one. The first Sutra "अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा" speaks of Brahman as limitless, partless pure *atmasvarupa.* The second Lakshana Sutra also speaks of Brahman as the cause-*Abhinnenimitta-padanakarana* through *Sakhacandranyaya.* It is to be noted that the word *Samanvaya* in the Sutras *Sastrayonitvat, Tattusamanvayat* means oneness and sastras are the authority in the realisation of Brahman which is nondual, partless, pure and only one real entity.

Thus the four Sutras चतुःसूत्री describe the nondual partless Brahman.

The fourth *adhyaya,* the Sutra "आत्मेहितूपगच्छ न्ति ग्राहयन्ति च" stands testimony to a principal sentence wherein the potential unity between Jiva and Brahman is highlighted through the words *Upagaccanti* and *Grahayanti.*

Thus the three *Prasthanas* vividly deal with the pure consciousness Brahman which is nondual and partless.

The humanity should spiritually enrich itself by hearing, contemplating and deeply churning the inner import of the *Mahavakyas,* the culmination of which is the *Jiva Brahmaikyabhaava.*

For achieving this spiritual unity and solidarity by integral consciousness, it is better to follow the lives of the great Mahapurushas like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and Swami Vivekananda.

(Translated by Dr. V.L. Sethuraman)

THE CONCEPT OF PURUṢĀRTHAS IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Miss SUPRIYA C. DESHMUKH

Purusārthas are the goals which a human being strives to achieve. Purusa means a person and artha means whatever is sought after, an object, an end or a goal. (पुरुष्य अर्थः प्रयोजनम्) The doctrine of puruṣārthas means a theory regarding human goals. Puruṣārtha is also taken as a 'value' in the modern sense, i.e. these are the values which ought to be cherished. Purusārthas is a comprehensive term - representing the possible goals of human life. The various aspirations of a person can be classed into one of these four groups. The concept of purusārthas provides a framework for a person to plan his life. There are four purusārthas according to Indian tradition - dharma, artha, kāma and mokṣa. There is a mention of trivarga (a class consisting of three puruṣārthas - dharma, artha and kāma) in some of the ancient works. Moksa, the fourth purusārtha was added to this list from the upanisadic age.

The Vedic Aryans had an optimistic attitude towards life. They longed for a rich and fuller life. They followed the Vedic injunctions and performed yajnās (sacrifices), obtained wealth through righteous means and satisfied their desires in a restrained and purified manner. They had a proportionate distribution of dharma, artha and kāma in their lives. This balance was disturbed in later times. During the upaniṣadic age the concept of moksa was developed and considered as the supreme goal of human existence. This concept of moksa tried to reconcile the disproportionate emphasis on Vedic rituals of the Brāhmanic age. Artha became the chief concern in the epic period and the age of tantras brought with it the dominance of kāma. Too much emphasis on any one of the purusārthas hampers a person's progress and brings dissatisfaction.

In modern times it is seen that there is too much stress on artha and kāma which is responsible for the degradation of human values and ideals. The present paper aims at discussing the four puruṣārthas as depicted in Indian tradition and their role in moulding the future generation.

DHARMA

The word dharma can be derived from the root 'dhṛ' which means to uphold, to

maintain, to support, to nourish, to restrain. Dharma is used in the sense of upholder, supporter, sustainer, in the Ṛgveda (I 18.7 and X 9.22). Dharma sustains and nourishes human life. It is in this sense that dharma is considered as a moral concept or value. The word dharma is sometimes translated as religion but the meaning is more comprehensive. Dharma means duties, virtues, social values, etc.

In the Vedas dharma consisted in performing different rituals for material prosperity as well as a better life after death. The Vedas are full of such hymns in which different deities are propitiated for a healthy and enjoyable life of a hundred years (जीवेम शरदः शतत्। VII. 66.16) full of material prosperity. In the Brāhmaṇas there are descriptions of yajnās lasting for many days. These were the combined efforts of eminent personalities to tackle social problems. The sacrifices in the age of the upanisads became more internalized and the upanisadic seers craved for lasting peace forsaking this and other-worldly material benefits. In the Purānic age dharma acquired a different dimension. It consisted in the performance of different *vratas,* festivals, and acts of charity. In the epic period and especially in the Bhagavad-gīta dharma means one's allocated duty.

Dharma became a value to be cherished for social well-being. The term *satya* came under the field of dharma. In the Taittirīya upanisad it is stated in *sikṣāvalli* - सत्यं वद धर्मं चर one should speak the truth and walk along the path of righteousness. Thus righteous conduct becomes a necessary prerequisite for a follower of dharma.

The concept of *varnāśrama dharma* gained importance in the Smṛti period. We find an earlier mention of the four varnas in the *purusasukta* of the Ṛgveda. These varṇas were elaborated later on during the Smṛti age. The varna system is based upon the principle of division of labour. A man was free to choose any profession depending upon his capabilities and aptitudes. Later on this system became rigid.

The *ashrama-dharma* also developed during the Smṛti age. Life was divided into four parts - *brahmacaryāśrama, gṛahastāsrama, vānaprasthāśrama* and *sanyāsāśrama.* The first part of the life was devoted to gaining knowledge. The second part consisted in entering the life of a householder and performing different social duties. It is rightly said that the grhastāśrama is the source of sustenance for the other three aśramas. Every householder is required to perform the five sacrifices daily. These are - (i) brahmayajna, (chanting the Vedic mantras), (ii) devayajna (propitiating the deities), (iii) rṣiyajna, (propitiating the Vedic Seers

and Gurus), (iv) pitṛyajna (propitiating the ancestors), and (v) bhutayajna or nryajna (offering food and thus satisfying various living creatures). Welcoming a guest and offering him food became an important duty of a householder. There is a story in the Mahābhārata about how a person himself starving offered food to a guest and himself died due to starving. It stresses the importance of nṛyajña even at the cost of one's life.

After living a successful life as a householder one must renounce everything and live a hermit's life in which one minimizes his needs and aims for something higher. This is entering into the third stage of life. The final renunciation is the fourth stage.

Out of these four stages only two stages can be marked distinctly - that of a householder and that of a monk. These denote the two paths - pravrtti mārga and nivrtti mārga. Pravrtti mārga is the path of a householder, a path natural to a person's mentality He pursues the three goals dharma, artha and kāma in this stage. Successful performance of household duties leads to moksa. The nivrtti mārga is the path of a renunciate. He has to renounce everything and concentrate on his inner nature and know the Self or Ātman.

Dharma occupied a prominent place in life The other two puruṣārthas - artha and kāma acquired the status of a value only when they satisfied the norms of dharma. Dharma is not against the fulfilment of natural impulses or desires, but it opposes an unbalanced, unrestrained pursuit of material pleasures. Thus dharma brings about self-restraint.

Dharma also leads to self-development. Performance of one's duties in a detached manner, following Vedic injunctions, leading a moral life, purifies a person and elevates him from an ordinary being to a Divine Being.

ARTHA

The primary meaning of artha is wealth It also means property, material well-being, prosperity. Yāska (Nir.1.18) traces artha to the root r as meaning gone to, sought after, which he finally interprets as meaning wealth. The word artha in the term puruṣārtha means 'goals', but here artha has the meaning 'wealth'.

In the epic period we find the term artha used in the sense of political science. In the Māhābhārata we find the description of a well governed social order. (न राज्यं न च राजयासित न दण्डयो न दण्डिकः। स्वधर्मेण प्रजा सर्वा रक्षन्ति स्म परस्परम् । MB. *śānti-parva* 59.14) The best government is that which governs the least. The Kautilīya Arthasāstra also allocates the same meaning to the term artha. It describes the means of acquiring territory and protecting it.

Artha (taken in the sense of wealth) occupies an important place in life. It serves as a means of livelihood The other two purusārthas, dharma and kāma are dependent on artha. A person devoid of wealth is not able to perform religious rites and give alms, similarly a person cannot satisfy his desires without wealth (अर्थमूलौ हि धर्मकामौ । अर्थ: एव प्रधान.)

Pursuit of artha through righteous means is enjoined by the Scriptures For example, one finds in the Rgveda the famous *akśa sūkta* censuring a person who aspires to become rich by gambling (do not play dice) and advocates the way of honest labour We find the same current even in materialistic philosophers like the *cārvākas* - agriculture, cattle breeding, commerce, maintaining law and order...it is by these means that a person ought to acquire wealth. The fortieth chapter of the Śukla Yajurveda which is the Iśa upanisad commands - मा गृध कस्यस्विद्धनम् - do not covet others' wealth.

The wealth thus obtained through righteous means has to be utilized in a fruitful manner. A person has to first support his family, has to perform the five yajnās as a householder, and keep aside some income for society. In the purānas the concept of dāna gained importance.

The Atharvaveda also enjoins upon us to earn wealth with hundred hands and give it away with thousand ones *Iśa.up.* states that this whole universe is pervaded by the supreme Lord. The universe belongs to Him alone. (ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम्). Thinking thus one should partake only that much which is really necessary and distribute the remaining. (तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा) Thus it enjoins upon us to acquire and enjoy wealth with restraint and renunciation.

KĀMA

Kāma means desire. Connation of kāma ranges from sensual enjoyment to aesthetic delight. Kāma attains the status of a value only when desires are fulfilled through righteous means. Kāma brings about pleasure, happiness, but that happiness is on the empirical plane. The happiness is only momentary which finally lead to misery. The momentary happiness which is gained is dependent on external material objects and do not come from within.

By living a worldly life and performing one's own duties one can have enjoyments in a restrained manner. There is Divinity in kāma provided it is not opposed to moral values. (BG. VII.11) Kāma is to be fulfilled within the framework of dharma.

The *Brahmānandavalli* of *Taittirīya Upanisad* describes various levels of happiness in which satisfying physical

desires is the lowest. The five sheaths or levels of consciousness (known as the *pancakośas*) are described in this upanisad - the first sheath the *annamaya kośa* is concerned with satisfying the physical desires.

The *varnāśrama dharma* also provides a framework for fulfilling one's desires in a righteous way. For example for a householder there are less number of rules and regulations as compared to a monk; and he can perform his duties and satisfy his desires in a restrained manner.

MOKṢA

The word mokṣa is traced to the root 'muc' which means to release. Moksa thus means freedom - freedom from desires, freedom from suffering, freedom from fear. Moksa also means freedom from the cycles of births and deaths. Almost all Indian systems accepting the cārvākas has postulated mokṣa as their ultimate goal. This is the final goal of all human endeavours. In this sense all our śāstras are moksa oriented. Even a science like grammar has mokṣa as its ultimate value.

The traces of moksa are found in the Vedas. The *mahāmṛtyunjaya mantra* (Suk.Yaj.32.8) refers to a state of immortality. 'We worship *tryambaka* who spreads fragrance and increases nourishment. May he release me like a cucumber from its stem from mortal life but not from immortality or eternal bliss.

We find in the upanishads the concept of moksa fully developed. Herein moksa is equated with the term *amṛta*.(may He lead one from death to immortality). The śvetāśvatara upaniṣad addresses humanity as sons of immortality. (शृण्वन्तु विश्वे अमृतस्य पुत्राः) It also describes the means of attaining this mokṣa - I have realized this Great Person or Being effulgent or radiant like the sun beyond darkness. Knowing Him alone one transcends death. There is no other way to do so

The analogy of two birds in the Mundaka Upanisad asserts the inherent Divinity in man and describes the means of realizing this Divinity.

The upanisads also speak about the final unitary experience. (यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति). He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings feels no contempt towards any being. For a person of realization everything is the reflection of the Self. Such a person is free from delusion, sorrow, and fear. He crosses the limitations of his own individual self and merges with the universal Self. The ideal of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* is thus cherished.

The discrimination between what is desirable *(śreyas)* and what is pleasurable

(preyas) is discussed in the Katha Upanisad. Gratification of worldly desires even though pleasurable lead to transitory happiness. It is only a person endowed with discriminating intellect who probes deeper into the nature of happiness and does not crave for fleeting sensual pleasures. Nachiketa renounces all earthly pleasures bestowed on him by Yama and yearned for *atma-jnāna,* for the knowledge of what lies beyond death - the science of immortality.

Moksa is an ideal state which can be achieved in this life itself. Vedanta holds that moksa is a state of supreme bliss where there is complete cessation of all suffering. The Sāṅkhya is satisfied with the knowledge with which the three types of sorrows can be destroyed. This supreme bliss which one experiences is a state of perfection wherein nothing remains to be achieved. The bliss is from within and hence there is everlasting peace and tranquility.

III

With the approach of the third millennium a need is felt to review the age-old values of Indian tradition. The four-fold puruṣārthas guide a person to decide his aims and ideals in life.

Modern society is hankering after wealth and gratifying its desires through wealth. Thus artha and kāma are being pursued. The advances in science and technology made acquiring these goals easier This rat-race competition of acquiring more and more became deep-rooted. The present day crisis leading to social and economic insecurity has its roots in the gratification of desires without restraint

In such a society wherein only two values artha and kāma are cherished without their roots in dharma are no values at all. Dharma as meaning righteousness plays only a marginal role. Moreover there are some currents of goodness flowing through. The world is never without them.

The challenge kept before the great thinkers and academicians of the present era is to mould the present generation. Education which leads to man-making, developing the hidden potentialities, and character-building should be broadcasted the world over. For a society to prosper the four values - dharma, artha, kāma and moksa should be strived for harmoniously. The currents of dharma should be made to flow through all our mundane endeavours. Wealth should be gained through righteous means and not through exploitation. The ideal of tyāga and sevā has to reach the modern generation and that ideals must be propagated through education. The education which the present generation is receiving is not value-oriented character-building

education. The spirit of selflessness must fill the hearts of youth. Virtues such as truthfulness, non-violence, non-stealing, celibacy and non-accumulation are to be taught to the modern generation. Dharma has to be broadcasted the world-over in its widest sense as meaning righteous conduct and performance of one's duties detachedly.

By living a life cherished by the twin ideals of tyāga and sevā one attains supreme bliss, the ultimate goal of human existence. Mokṣa is a state wherein there are no more desires, nothing remains to be gained, it is a state which leads to the cessation of all miseries. In such a state a person truly performs his duties detachedly and works for social upliftment. The ideal state of moksa is not a cessation of all activity but a state of incessant activity. Then happiness is not sought in external world but it emanates from within. The layers of ignorance are destroyed and the Self shines in Its own splendour. ■

Anugraha Sandesa

GOOD ALWAYS TRIUMPHS



People in this world generally fall into two categories - the good and the bad. The good are pious, observe dharma, help fellow men, and refrain from troubling others, whereas the bad indulge in undesirable activities.

But often the good people face a lot of trials and tribulations. This raises a question in the minds of some people : Why does a good person face so many problems? Are his good deeds of no avail? In contrast, the bad ones live comfortably, and so the question arises : Why does a bad man enjoy a comfortable life?

We must understand an important point here. The joy and sorrow that man enjoys in this life are the fruits of the Karma performed in the previous birth. In his next birth, he will enjoy the fruits of the karma of his present life. Hence, the answer to the question of a good man suffering in this birth is that it is the result of the karma performed in his previous birth.

This holds good for the bad man enjoying a comfortable life. But, surely, he will pay for the sins committed in this birth. We must understand this so that even if we suffer in this birth, we continue to perform *satkarma* (good deeds) and refrain from *dushkarma* (bad deeds).

प्राक्कृत भोगावसरे ताम्यसि चेतो मुधा कुतो हेतो. ।
न्यग्रोधबीज मुप्त्वा शोचन्निवनाम्रमस्येति ॥

– H.H. Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamigal

YAGNA FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Dr. P.R. GOGNA

THE UNIVERSALITY AND ETERNITY OF THE VEDA

There is erosion of values all over today. Whether it be the Individual, the Family, the Institution, the Society, the Nation or the whole world, there is a yearning to find out a way out of this maze. The VEDA, of which YAJNA is an integral part, contains universal and eternal guidelines to take us out of this quagmire if we have the determination to learn and act on these as indicated in :

Paavakaa Nah Saraswatee
Vaajebhir Vaajnee Vatee
- *Rig*. 1-3-10

The Vedic secrets bless us with physical, mental and intellectual powers full of piety to enable us to attain immense powers and divinity as advised in

Amritasya Putra (Shwet.Up)

These would enable us to reach Vishnuhood, that is full of Peace, Perfection and Prospèrity given in

Vishnoh Pade Parame Madhva Utsah
- *Rig*. 1-154-5

In the feet of VISHNU exists the well of AMRIT/ Nectar or Bliss as also given by

Tadvishnoh Paramam Padam Sadaa
Pashyanti Soorayah
Diveeva Chakshuraatatam
- *Rig*. 1-22-20

The wise see His divinity as the widespread expanse of space and then put it in their hearts to enjoy eternal bliss.

THE GRANDEUR OF THE VEDIC TEACHINGS

The Veda is an unparalleled source of knowledge. Anyone who wants to make a deep study of the secrets of progress and development has to seriously study it.

- Prof. Max Muller in
"What India Can Teach the World".

The Veda stands for the philosophy of Dynamic Realism against that of Static Mysticism.

Some Vedic teachings and their practices help us in several ways as given below :

(a) *Stutaa Mayaa Varadaa Veda Maataa Pra Chodayantaam Paavamaanee Dvijaanaam*

Aayuh Praanam Prajaam Pashum
Keertim Drvinam Brahmavarchasam
Mahyam Dattva Vrajat Brahmalokam
- *Ath.*19-71-1

By Vedic study and practise attain longevity, vital energy, victory, wealth, fame, healthy progeny and spiritual splendour.

(b) *Vayam Syaama Patayo Rayeenaam*
– *Rig.* 10-121-10

Ramantaam Punyaa Lakshmeeryaah
Paapeestaa Aneenasham
– *Ath.*7-115.4

Achieve immense wealth through ethical values and destroy the ill-gotten one.

c) *Moghamannam Vindate Aprachetaah*
Satyam Braveemi Vadha It Sa Tasya
Naaryamanam Pushyati No Sakhaayam
Kewalaadho Bhavati Kewalaadee
- *Rig.* 10-117-6

One must share one's wealth with others, otherwise using it for oneself alone is like eating sin.

SOME VEDIC HYMNS ON IMPORTANCE OF YAJNA

Agne Yam Yajnamadhvaram
Vishvatah Paribhoorasi – *Rig.*1-1-4

God surrounds or blesses a Yajna where there is no violence by thought, by words and by action.

Ayagyiyaad Yagyiyam Bhaagamemi
– *Rig.* 10-124-3

God blesses and enriches those who perform Yajna and takes away wealth from those who do not do so.

Eejaanastarati Dvishah
- *Rig.*7-59-2

The Yajna performer gets empowered and becomes victorious over his enemies.

YAJNA FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Introduction

Yajna forms a very important part of the Veda. This word appears 1184 times in the Veda, i.e.

Rig Veda	580 times	Sama Veda	63 times
Yajur Veda	243 times	Atharva Veda	298 times

Meaning

Shreshthatamaya Karmanaa
श्रेष्ठतमाय कर्मणा – *Yaj.*I-1

Na Karma Lipyate Nare
न कर्म लिप्यते नरे – *Yaj.*40-2

Any noble work done for the welfare of others, *Lokopakaara,* without any desire for fruits and with a sense of surrender to God is Yajna. It is done on the basis of

- Cooperation, Collaboration, Co-existence
- Dedication, Devotion, Discipline, Sweetness
- Surrender, Simplicity, Worship and Selflessness.

The world under the control of God is run on this basis and man can follow this in his life, in different spheres, through detachment and motive of service.

UNIVERSALITY OF YAJNA

Ayam Yajnayo Bhuvanasya Naabhih
– *Rig.* 1-164-35

Just as the navel influences our body, so the YAJNA which connotes, promotes, egolessness, DEVAPOOJAA, SANGATEEKARANA and DAANA, is the centre around which this universe revolves. The whole Nature exists on these principles. There will be chaos if these principles, the centre of the Universe, are disturbed.

The YAJNA spirit has to be applied to all aspects of life which is a YAJNA by understanding and practising which this life can lead to overall success and happiness of all concerned.

SPIRIT OF YAJNA

The Spirit of Yajna is contained in the message conveyed by these terms :

Idam Na Mama
Swaahaa
Dvipade – Chatushpade
Poornatva

These are explained below :

A - Idam Na Mama

The word IDAM NA MAMA is recited with several oblations (*Ahuti*) in the Yajna. Its literal meanings are :

IDAM – This act or oblation
MAMA – Mine
NA MAMA – Not for me only

It means "this act or oblation does not belong to me, this is not for me only" – as dramatized by food eating, chewing and digesting where every organ of the digestive system processes the food and passes it on to the next saying, as if, "I renounce my claim on anything left with me", "I surrender this". Therefore, enjoy things as if they belong to someone else as pointed by

TYENA TYAKTEYNA BHUNJITHAA
- *Yaju.* 40-1

NA KARMA LIPYATEY NAREY
- *Yaju.* 40-2

"These advise that one should enjoy with detachment and surrender one's actions to HIM".

Hence the importance of Sharing/ Daana as a natural duty and not for any selfish motive. It ordains that Tyaaga or Discipline which leads to Liberation :-

RIG VEDA (4-54-5) declares

Yathaa Yathaa Patyanto Viyemira
Evaiva Tasthuh Savitah Savaaya Te

As and when they increase in their discipline, O Savitaah (God), they get established in following you (and you liberate them).

Through this TYAAGA (or NISHKAAMA BHAAVA) we do not acquire poverty and destitution. On the contrary, giving up is only for a more complete achievement. Only by working without attachment do I acquire complete authority over action (YAJNA).

Do this Yajna as witness only. There is no way out but this

Naanyah Panthaa Vidyate Ayanaaya
*Yaj.*31-18

IDAM NA MAMA spirit helps us to dedicate ourselves to the service of all to get rid of the temptations of jealousy, avarice, hatred, violence, sensuality, arrogance and attachment.

When we work and live as an act of offering we achieve immortal fame. Remember that this offering by one is the acceptance by Him.

Tasya Vraatyasya
Eykam Tadeyshaam Amritatvami
Tyaahutireva
– *Ath.*15-17-10

"Surrender every act of yours to the Divine. Offer all your thoughts, words and actions to Him. This surrender has to be unconditioned, unbargaining by a feeling – Let Thy will be done". This desirelessness is immortality which is achieved when we realize :-

"This body is His, not mine
This wealth is His, not mine
He is the giver excellent
But I, out of ignorance.
Arrogate it to myself.

While mind saying 'I and mine' is His

I accept the resources of Saadhanaa are also His."

B – SWAAHAA

SWAAHAA is pronounced with every oblation in the Fire during Yajna to indicate peace and happiness and that it is auspicious.

According to Nirukta of Yaaska (a Vedic Dictionary)

SWAAHAA KRITYAH is

Su Aaheti Vaa	- Polite, sweet, well-being words to be spoken by all
Swaa Vaagaaheti Vaa	- Speak the words which come from the mind – with knowledge
Swa Praaheti Vaa	- Think of your own things only as yours, not of others
Swaahutam Havi	- Offering should be pure
Swa Aha	- Tyaaga of the Self or Ego or Ahamkar; Surrender to the Supreme Self

To be able to realize "IDAM NA MAMA" and "SWAAHAA" one must practise the eight–fold path of :

Yagya, Shaastraas study, Non-Stealing, Discipline, Truth, Patience, Forgiveness and Non-Greediness.

C – DVIPADEY – CHATUSHPADEY

Shanno Astu Dvipadey Sham Chatushpadey

- *Yaju.*36-8

शं नो अस्तु द्विपदे शं चतुष्पदे

We pray for the well-being of all – i.e., men, animals, insects etc.

Man is a social being. God loves him only when he serves other beings. His glory lies in being a member of a big group by contributing to its well-being, prosperity and peace and bliss. This hints at the inter-dependence, complementary of one with other. Birds, animals, insects and man complement each other. Hence the prayer for well-being of all as

Sarvey Bhavantu Sukhinaah Sarvey Santu Niraamayaah

Sarvey Bhadraani Pashyantu Maa Kashchit Dukha Bhaagbhaveyt

D – POORNATVA

(a) *Om Poornamadah Poornamidam*
Poornaat Poornam Udachyatey
Poornasya Poornamaadaaya
Poornameyvaavashishyatey

- *Upanishad*

ओं पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

God is *poorna,* absolute. He has created absolute out of Himself. Hence man, the creation of God, can also reach the absolute, the immortality, by dint of His grace and his efforts

(b) *Ayutoaham Ayuto Ma Aatmaayutam*
Mey Chakshurayutam
Mey Shrotramayuto
Mey Praano Ayuto
Mey Apaano Ayuto
Mey Vyaano Ayuto Aham Sarvah

- *Ath.* 19-51-1

I am extremely powerful. My eyes, ears, *praanaas* are extremely powerful. All gods – air, water, fire etc. are at my service.

CONSTITUENTS OF YAJNA

YAJNA has three connotations – i.e. DEVA POOJA, SANGATEEKARANA and DAANA – all these three speak of interdependence or mutuality in man's body and in nature. These are elaborated below.

1. DEVAPOOJA

It consists of due reverence, homage and recognition of (a) God, Almighty, Mahaadeva = Paramaatmaa (b) the Chetan Devas. Chetan in the form of Parents, Teachers and Seniors, Guests and (c) Jada : Gods like Air, Water, Earth, Space and Fire. It can be performed by

(a) looking after the *Parents'* needs and comforts physical, mental, intellectual and spiritual needs – with a spirit of duty, selfless service and self-surrender, respectfully, following their teachings, listening to them, enlightening them with present ways life. Endeavouring to bridge the generation gap. Facilitating their efforts to lead healthy and socially useful life.

- *Ath.*6-120-1&2

May we respect the mother, the father and brother, the earth, the sky and the mid-space and may God forgive us the violence we might have perpetrated on them, through ignorance or otherwise.

(b) respecting the Teachers – Understanding, living on their teachings, promoting these widely and researching these, looking after their needs whenever required.

(c) Respecting the Guests and Friends

Atithi Devo Bhava

Give your eyes to them, i.e. see them with respect and love (Karma).

Give your Mind to them, i.e. pray for their well-being by your heart.

Give them your sweet words.

Look after their genuine needs; also learn from them.

(d) Respecting the gods by

Not polluting Air, Water, Earth, Aakaash, Agni. Making judicious use of these natural resources. Not exploiting these through over-use. Not disturbing the ecological balance between man and nature.

(e) Respecting God (Brahma Yajna) by surrendering to Him, *Idam Na Mama, Sarvam Vai Poornam.*

(f) Respecting and Protecting the Animals.

2. SANGATEEKARANA

Sangateekaran is the second constituent of YAJNA. It is maintaining unity and integrity of the organization by the same thoughts, words and deeds; understanding the laws of union and disunion, synthesis and analysis, integration and disintegration and for these purposes study of pure sciences, technology and industry and setting up of organizations for healthy discussion without any discrimination.

Build teams out of differences thereby taking decisions by consensus.

Unity is encouraged by following these Verses of RIG VEDA : X-191-2, 3 & 4 which promote unity among people through sameness of their thoughts, words (i.e. sameness of language) and deeds – the purpose of Unity being common good of the society (not like a gang of dacoit).

Move together (as in the Army), speak the same language (very important for effective communication/understanding up and down between individuals, between leader and its team members, between Government and those affected by its policies), let the minds apprehend in harmony.

Sam Gachhadhwam Sam Vadadhwam
Sam Vo Manaamsi Jaanataam
Deva Bhaagam Yathaa Poorve
Sam Jaanaanaah Upaasate

Rig. X-192-2
Ath. VI-64-1

सं गच्छध्वं सं वदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते ॥

Sameness of your knowledge and deliberations, thoughts and emotions and resolutions create healthy powerful organizations for prosperity and happiness where all are in perfect harmony without any discrimination.

Samaanao Mantrah Samitih Samaanee
Samaanam Manah Saha Chittameyshaam
Samaanam Mantramabhi Mantraye Vah
Samaanena Vo Havishaa Juhomi

Rig. X-191-3
Ath. VI-64-2

समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानी
समानं मनः सह चित्तमेषाम्
समानं मन्त्रमभि मन्त्रये वः
समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमि

Sameness of your Sankalpa and Wills, hearty feelings and thoughts, will help you to build cooperative united teams, where differences are settled after mutual consultations.

Samaanee Va Aakootih
Samaanaa Hridayaani Vah
Samaanamastu Vo Mano
Yathaa Vah Susahaasati

Rig. X-191-2,3 & 4

समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति ॥

Through unity of purpose and procedures the members of the family or group will be strong, rich, famous, happy, having no love-hate syndrome and there will be fellow-feeling and righteousness.

SANGATEEKARAN also means that man should do his *Swadharma* to these gods which is typified by the offering of oblations to the sacred Fire – i.e. service of Rishis , Manes, Men, Beasts, Birds and others and making them happy. Man performs Yajna by which the Gods are pleased, they give rain which produces food on which depends creations. This is *Sangateekarana* among man, gods and Nature – i.e., in the Cycle of creation as depicted below :

God → Veda → Actions → Yajna → Rain → Food → Creation

There is mutual give and take between man and gods. Man offers gifts, oblations and prayers to gods who, in return, bless him with the desired boons.

Deyhi Mey Dadaami Tey Ni Mey Dheyhi
Ni Ta Dadhey
Nihaaram Cha Haraasi Mey Nihaaram
Ni Haraani Tey Swaahaa

Yaj. III – 50

देहि मे ददामि ने नि में धेहि नि त दधे ।
निहारं च हरासि, मे निहारंनि हराणि ते स्वाहा ॥

SANGATEEKARAN within man is established when his KARMENDRIYAS, GYANENDRIYAS, MIND, INTELLECT, CHITTA nad AHAMKAAR harmoniously combine to perform austerities and charities and thus enable him to do his duties according to his Varna (capabilities), Ashrama (stage in life) and Guna (SATTVA, RAJAS, TAMAS).

The following *Five Principles* (*Panch Sheels*) are based on SANGATEEKARAN i.e., abstain from :

Killing, Stealing, Adultery, Lying and Liquor.

SPREAD BROTHERHOOD AMONGST ALL

Sahridayam Sammanasyam
Avidvesham Krinomi Vah
Anyo Anyamabhi Haryata
Vatsam Jaatamivaaghnyaa

- *Ath.*3-30-1

Let there be unanimity in your hearts and minds, no hatred and aversions. Love one another as cow loves her newly born calf.

Maa Bhraataa Bhraataram
Dvikshanmaa
Swasaaramuta Swasaa
Samyanchah Savratah Bhootvaa
Vaacham Vadata Bhadrayaa

- *Ath.* 3-30-3

Let brothers and sisters not hate each other. May they speak gently being united in their mind, ideal and goal in life.

Mitrasya Maa Chakshushaa
Sarvaanı Bhootaani Sameekshantaam
Mitrasyaaham Chak Shushaa
Sarvaani Bhootaani Sameekshey
Mitrasya Chakshushaa
Sameekshaamahey

- *Yaju.*36-18

May all regard me with the eye of a friend; May I regard all beings with the eye of a friend; We regard one another with the eye of a friend.

3. DAANA (Charity)

DAANA is the third constituent of Yajna. Below are given the messages of the Veda regarding the meaning and importance of Daana.

Sameen Paneyrajati Bhojanam Mushey
Vi Daashushey Bhajati Soonaram Vasu

Durgey Chana Dhriyatey Vishva Aa Puroo
Jano Yo Asya Tavisheemachukrudhat

- *Rig.* 5-34-7

God does not favour the dishonest rich who do not share their wealth with the needy and the poor. God snatches the wealth of such rich. He bestows riches on the generous.

Dravinodaa Dravinaso Graavahastaaso
Adhvarey Yajneyshudeyvameelatey

- *Rig.* 1-15-7

Those who earn honestly and give generously earn more enjoying respect in society.

Na Sa Sakhaa Yo Na Dadaai Sakhey
Sachaabhuva Sachamaanaya Pitvah
Apaasmaat Preyaann Tadoko Asti
Prinantamanyamaranam Chidichheyt

- *Rig.* 10-117-4

He who is selfish and feeds himself alone and refuses to share his food with the starving is not fit to be a friend.

Prinneeyaadinnaahamaanaaya Tavyan
Dradheeyaamsamanu Pashyeyta Panthaam
O Hi Vartantey Rathyeyva Chakraa
Anyamanyamupa Tishthanta Rayah

- *Rig.* 10-117-5

The fortune rich should fulfil the needs of the poor. The wheel of riches keeps on rolling-today with one, tomorrow with another. We must realize that one day we may need the help of someone.

THE REAL SPIRIT OF DAANA

(a) *Chaanakya Sutrani – P.134*
Daanam Dharmah
Daana is man's duty for self – benefit.

The Donor in this sense considers the donation (the thing given) as a trust money that was kept with him as a deposit by the Donatee to whom he is now returning his deposit. So, the donation was really the property of the Donatee, the Donor is only freeing himself of the debt by giving the Daana. Here the discrimination between the Donor and the Donatee disappears.

(b) The Gita – 9-27 says,

Whatever you do, eat, give, offer in sacrifice, practice as austerity, do it as an offering to Me. Thus through all activities and in all circumstances if one can keep oneself in an "Offering Attitude" one can come to gain the peace of spiritual living. Thus it is the mental attitude which determines the quality of any action.

Law of giving works for Individuals, Societies, Corporations and Nations :-

Start your day with giving :

Prayer and Thanks to God, Parents
Thanks to Nature
Thanks to Teachers
Thanks to Relatives
Blessings to Juniors

Love, Appreciation and Attention to all.

– He who does not offer oblations to the gods and does not help the needy friends but only enjoys himself he eats sin only, i.e., his food becomes poison.
– He who gives no Daana, gets no help when in need.
– He who eats himself can get no happiness.

Earn through efforts of a hundred hands and distribute – donate – through broad–heartedness by a thousand hands.

– *Ath.*3-24-5

The earth receives one seed but gives so many fruits with so many seeds.

Daataa Raadhaansi Shumbhati

- *Rig.* 1-22-8

दाता राधांसि शुम्भति

DAANA denotes giving which can be in the form of wealth, respect, service, knowledge – the concept being that it is by GIVING that man receives back manifold and it would lead to real AANANDA provided it is done without expecting any return, and with SHRADDHAA. This spirit of GIVING has to be emphasized while recruiting the personnel and educating the children.

EARNING WEALTH AND YAJNA

What is Wealth?

Wealth includes Prosperity, Fame, Love, Beauty, Power, Work, Knowledge, Dignity, Freedom, Courage, Valour, Heroism etc.

The earning-of-wealth becomes Yajna when it is done

* as surrender to Him
* for service to all
* for welfare of both body and soul
* under the control of Dharma and Moksha
* as duty
* as means and not as an end.
* The VEDA encourages us to earn wealth and prosperity with perfection in life. This is possible when wealth is earned through fair means and is used for the welfare of all while surrendering it to Him.

SHARING WEALTH WITH OTHERS

Earn wealth with all your might as your duty, as NISHKAAMA KARMA and share it with all. This is Vedic Socialism, also guided by :

- treat the whole world as a family
- covet not other's wealth
- enjoy with detachment and renunciation

Be warned that having earned wealth endeavour to control your enemies that are Lust, Anger, Greed, Infatuation, Arrogance

and Laziness. If this warning is ignored wealth can turn to be an enemy.

एन्द्र सानसिं रयिं सजित्वानं सदासहम् ।
वर्षिष्ठमूतये भर

\- *Rig.* 1-8-1

ETHICS FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

A. Fulfil the four goals (PURUSHAARTHAS) in life :

DHARMA, ARTHA, KAAMA, MOKSHA, for a life of self-fulfilment.

DHARMA Constitutes Virtues like

Non-Violence	(*Ahimsa*)
Non-Stealing	(*Asteya*)
Truth	(*Satya*)
Self-Control	(*Brahmacharya*)
Dispossession	(*Aparigraha*)
Non-Consumerism	(*Upabhoktavaada*)

ARTHA means

Earning by fair means and sharing it with others for social well-being/ *Lokopakaara.*

KAAMA It inspires man. It destroys man. – *Ath.*9-2-19

There is need to restrain desires. - *Yaj.*40-1

Both Artha and Kaama should be guided by Dharma to achieve prosperity with peace.

MOKSHA is freedom from ignorance, suffering and ill deeds leading thereby to happiness. The more intensive is the desire for Moksha the easier it is to have righteousness in Artha and Kaama.

A life which works by DHARMA, ARTHA and KAAMA would result in MOKSHA for all.

ETHICS FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY

B. Trust in Man's Immense Potential

Man has DEVATAAS (i.e. Fire or AGNI, Air or VAAYU, Water or JALA, Space or AAKAASHA and Earth or PRITHVEE) in his body because of which he is endowed with their powers of progress and brilliance, peace, broad-mindedness and patience.

C. Practise Universality of Divinity

"See Him in everyone and everyone in Him". - *Yaju.*40-1

D. Giving or Sharing Wealth with fellow citizens is not only a virtue, but also an economic necessity.

Do charity with pleasure as an opportunity to serve Him with IDAM NA MAMA Spirit.

– *Rig.* 10-117-6

E. Prayer to seek GOD's blessings to get virtues and remove shortcoming :

(a) O God! May our Speech, Vital Energy, Eyes, Ears, Navel, Heart,

Throat, Head (Mind), Arms and Feet earn fame and strength for us.

(b) O God! Drive away our all Vices and Calamities and grant us Virtues.

- *Yaju.*30-3

CONCLUSION

I cannot conclude this paper better than by sharing with you a famous passage from Swamiji's lecture on The Mission of the Vedanta in which he sends out to everyone this inspiring message of the means of achieving total human excellence (*The Complete Works,* Vol.III, P.193) :

"Teach yourselves, teach everyone, his real nature; call upon the sleeping soul and see how it awakes. Power will come, glory will come, goodness will come, purity will come, and everything that is excellent will come, when this sleeping soul is roused to self-conscious activity." ■

OPINION OF SCHOLARS

Friedrich Max Muller :

a) If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow in some parts a very paradise on earth, - I should point to India.

b) If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of Life, and has found solutions of some of which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant - I should point to India.

c) If I were to ask myself from what literature we here in Europe, we, who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semetic Race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect more comprehensive more Universal, in fact more truly human, a life not for this Life only but a transfigured and eternal Life, again I should point to India.

According to Schopenhauer (a German Philosopher), "There is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my Life, it will be the solace of my death".

According to Romain Rolland - If there is one place on the face of the earth where all the dreams of living men have found a home from the very earliest days when man began the dream of existence, it is India.

According to Sri Aurobindo–Mother India is not a piece of earth, she is a power, a Godhead. He predicted that India will be the "moral leader of the world".

According to Jiddu Krishnamurthy - The function of education must be to transcend the barriers of caste, creed, religion, and region and help us like members of one great community in an atmosphere of love and peace.

From R.C. Venkateswarlu's Paper.

VEDAS AND TANTRA

D. SRIJITH

We may notice explicit influence of the Vedas and Tantras on Indian culture. We understand from the *Hāritadharmasūtra* that the Vedas and Tantras have independent existence :

"अथातो धर्म व्याख्यास्याम श्रुतिप्रमाणको धर्मः।
श्रुतिश्च द्विविधा वैदिकी तान्त्रिकी च"

These two are extensive and explicit pathways relating to the materials and values of life existence. There were many investigations in the Vedas in the past. Hence in this article more attention is devoted to the Tantras alone. The term Vedas has been derived from the Sanskrit root 'vid' - to know. Hence Vedas are the collection of knowledge obtained from investigations. Those who hasten for protection from the frightening consequences arising from nature make the proposition 'I am the universe and the power that creates it'. It is true that from the study of the contents of the Vedas one gains the knowledge of everything. There were inquiries made by the people of the Vedic period relating to the origin of the world.

The hymn (in the Rv.x.129) raises a doubt whether a sentient or insentient one was there at the beginning before creation. Although our great sages have proclaimed that the knowledge of the self is supreme, they have not neglected the description of other knowledge that it is lower. On the contrary they have made veiled reference to them in the Vedas without any reservation.

For example -

1) परोऽपेहि मनस्पाप किमशस्तानि शंससि ।
परोहि नत्वा कामये वृक्षां वनानि सं चर गृहेषु
गोष्ठ मे मनः Av.vi.45,1

The fruit of this prayer is the warding off the evil consequences arising out of most dreadful dreams.

2) द्यौश्च मा इदं पृथिवी च प्रचेतसौ शुक्रो बृहन्
दक्षिणया पिपर्तु
अनुस्वधाचिकितां सोमो अग्निर्वायुर्न
पातु सवित्र भजश्च Av.vi.53,1

The fruit of this prayer is the healing of the wounds on the neck.

We know from this that the Vedic people were in search of means for gaining control over the natural forces for the sake of health. Moreover the age of sacrifices had its beginning only after this period. The fourfold division of the Vedas was for the purpose of easy performance of the sacrifices. They were further divided into Samhitā, Brāhmana, Āraṇyaka and the Upaniṣad. It has to be inferred that this division rose in order. Materials for knowledge for the sake of those men who had gained detachment towards a worldly life were laid down in the Upaniṣads. Thereafter there arose the understanding that the term Veda implied the Upaniṣads dealing with philosophy (vedānta). One can notice the description of philosophy of life in the entire Vedas. Hence there is no need for any discussion about the utility of the study of the Vedas even in the present context. But it is to be regretted that all these materials have been far removed from our daily life at present.

Let us now deal with the Tantra. The term 'tantra' is derived from the Sanskrit root *'tanu'*. There are ten different meanings of the word 'tantra' according to the Sanskrit lexicon *Medinī.* Accordingly the word has the sense of family rites, dogma, an outstanding warrior, main point, loom, a scientific work, a section of a work, a religious treatise and the cause of more than one effect. Man is the main subject matter in the Tantra. The Tantra is the collection of materials relating to the different pathways for the fulfilment of the determination of men. The Tantra has three internal divisions as Tantra, Āgama, and Saṁhitā. Generally the Tantras denote the Śākta works, Āgamas the Śaiva works and Saṁhitās the Vaiṣnava works. On the basis of the division of the regions, the Tantras are divided into three groups - Vishṇukrāntā, Rathakrāntā and Aśvakrāntā. According to the views of the orthodox scholars Visnukrāntā had the currency from the region east of the Vindhya ranges to Caṭṭala (Java), Rathakrāntā from the region of the Vindhya to the great ocean and Aśvakrāntā from the region north of the Vindhya to the Mahācīna. There are sixty-four Tantras in each one of these three texts. There is a great misconception in the minds of the people that the Tantras are not useful in general on account of the six practices employed by the followers of the Śākta school. It is ignorance to hold the Śāstra as responsible for the improper application of the Śāstra for unrighteous purposes. The secrets of the Tantraśāstra are gained by the grace of a preceptor after searching him and serving him for several years. Hence it must be understood that the above view relating to the Tantras are mere prattle of those who consider

themselves as proficient after acquaintance with the Tantras without seeking instruction from a preceptor.

During the ages when the Vedic school was reigning supreme, the Tantras were disregarded and neglected. The Tantras were revived with the help of Buddhism, which rejected the authority of the Vedas. Later being unable to reject the Tantra school the followers of the Vedic school accommodated it. Now the Tantra in India is a blending of the Veda and Tantra. The sacred places in Kerala are the visual manifestations of the Tantras for the welfare of the world. The installation is a process by which the formless power within is transformed into one with a form for the welfare of the world. One can notice the perfect inseparable blending of the Vedas and Tantra in the Keralakṣetra Tantras, which are the cause for the welfare of the world. We may understand the mutual intimate union of the Vedas and the Tantras from a deep study of the Vedic hymns employed at the time of the consecration together with the sense conveyed by them.

The Vedas and Tantras are the hidden import of life. Since all do not think alike, we may be able to perceive difference between the two pathways. Even then it is indisputable that the truth expressed by both is one and the same. The Indians knowing the main as truth accepted both the pathways. Hence our culture flourished. It is possible to know how firmly established are the two pathways in our culture from an analytical study of the two.

(Translated by Prof. N.Gangadharan)

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VEDIC WISDOM AND MODERN SCIENCE

A holistic perspective

Prof. Dr. D. SRI RAMA RAO

The entire world of Modern Science and Physics in particular is moving towards a knowledge of "Final Unity" in the Universe. The grand unification that Physics contemplates today besides mass and energy, is of mind and matter, subject and object, scientist and experiment and still deeper into the way of how consciousness is related to this Universe. The Vedanta, affirmed this unity as the very basis of all existence and the ultimate goal of all knowledge. In their search after Truth, the Vedic seers came face to face with the one Supreme Deity, 'who has become all this', `whom the learned and the wise described in many forms of expressions.' (Rig Veda).

The unifying message of Vedanta was given to the western world of Science and Technology as early as the 1890's by Swami Vivekananda when he declared, "It is through multiplicity and duality that the ultimate unity is reached....Religion can go no further. This is the goal of all Science."

MODERN ATOMIC PHYSICS

Modern particle physics shows that the subatomic particles have no meaning as isolated entities, but can only be understood as interconnections between process of observation and measurement.

In 1964, J.S. Bell, a physicist at the European Organization for Nuclear Research in Switzerland, published a mathematical paper (Bell's Theorem) which implies that, at a deep and fundamental level, the "separate parts" of the Universe are all connected in an intimate and immediate way. David Bohm, Prof. of Physics at Birbeck College, University of London proposes (based on Quantum Physics) that Quantum Physics depends on acceptance of the Universe as a unity. Thus atomic physics reveals a basic oneness of the Universe.

Thousands of years ago the Upanishads realized this fundamental truth - the entire universe is one, interconnected and interpenetrated by the ultimate reality which they termed Brahman. "That Reality has interpenetrated the whole Universe' says the sage in Brahadaranyaka Upanishad (3.8.8). And the ultimate nature of Brahman is eternal (and therefore all-pervading) existence, eternal (and therefore

all penetrating) knowledge, eternal (and therefore all interpenetrating the entire universe including the mind of man and his consciousness) bliss. The Mundaka Upanishad, begins with the question of a student to his guru: (what is it?) O, adorable Sir, which having been known, all this known? "The teacher concludes saying: `know that one Atman which has interpenetrated the earth, the subtler world of thought, the cosmic heavens, the mind and the vital energies of all living beings.'

Modern particle physics shows the folly of trying to search for a single object, a sub-atomic particle or an electron as a separate independent reality. Such a thing does not exist (*mithya* in Vedanta).

The contradictory nature of this phenomenal world is: `If we ask, for instance, whether the position of the electron remains the same, we must say `no', if we ask whether the electron is at rest we must say `no', if we ask whether it is in motion, we must say `no'. An ancient Upanishadic seer uttered with equal force about Brhaman (the ultimate reality) behind his phenomenal world: `It moves, It moves not, It is far, and yet It is near, It is within all this, and it is outside all this' (Isa Upanishad). Thus the right vision is to perceive the whole (`unbroken wholeness') in the so called isolated entity.

Our Ancient wisdom has already conceived of `a whole that remains a whole even after the whole is taken away from it'. (Isavasya Upanishad') Physically, mentally and spiritually reality is `whole'. Each atom, says Vivekananda, reflects the whole universe' - one atom in this universe cannot move without dragging the whole world along with it. Thus modern science with most advance scientific theories has really made the foundations of religion strong and especially in the spiritual traditions of India.

In the view of mystics, the cosmos is seen as one inseparable reality which is forever in motion, alive, organic, spiritual and material at the same time. This picture appears in modern physics. According to the physicists matter is not passive and inert, but it is in a state of continuous dancing and vibrating motion whose rhythmic patterns are determined by the molecular, atomic, and nuclear structure. The whole universe is thus engaged in endless motion and activity, in rhythmic dance of creation and destruction. The metaphor of the cosmic dance has found its most beautiful expression in the image of Nataraj. For the modern physicist, the dance of Siva is the dance of subatomic matter and it is a continual dance of creation and destruction involving the cosmos; the basis of all existence and of all natural phenomena. The metaphor of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art and modern physics. Sri Aurobindo proposed that reality is composed of "vibration" or

"frequencies" ranging from gross matter to subtle psychic energies. He predicted that this frequency view of reality would soon be discovered by science.

A NEW CONCEPT OF MIND MIND - MATTER INTERACTION

According to the basic Vedantic truth, 'all matter is connected with mind'. Vivekananda was never tired of asserting the oness of mind and matter in his exposition of Vedanta. `Mind becomes matter, matter in its turn becomes mind, it is simply a question of vibration.'

One of the factors that is being slowly felt as an indispensable necessity is the inclusion of consciousness in determining external reality (Geoffrey Chew boot strap theory and supported by Fritjof Capra) "that consciousness may be an essential aspect of the Universe" helps us to understand the Universe. "Matter is a form of veiled life. Life a form of veiled consciousness" says Sri Aurobindo in his work on Evolution. David Bohm (physicist) brings us the matter - mind continuum, seeing consciousness and matter as inextricably linked. Scientists also believe that consciousness is nothing more than matter, an electrochemical phenomenon.

In 1961 Nobel Physicist Wigner proposed that the `consciousness of the scientist is directly responsible for the ultimate knowledge of the external reality brings modern physics almost at the door of Vedanta. Erwin Schrodinger echoes Max Plank and drives home directly the Vedantic principle that consciousness creates matter and not vice versa. `The act of observation has an inextricable connection between the observer and the observed' is the vedantic idea, clarifies Vivekananda.

SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF CONSCIOUSNESS - RELATED PHYSICAL PHENOMENA 1980

Experimental investigation of mind - matter interaction has been in progress over the last 2 to 3 decades at Princeton University, U.S.

Results :1. Lead to postulation of the existence of a 'consciousness field' caused by human mind akin to the concepts of gravitational and magnetic fields in Physics to explain 'action-at-distance' between astronomical bodies or magnetic fields. Further researches have led to the postulation 'that it is perhaps an inherent property of the consciousness field to bring about 'order' where 'disorder' or randomness exists. A surprising offshoot that has emerged from studies is "the emotions of human operations may interfere with the controlling devices and processes" and "protection against such consciousness - related interference may become essential to the design and operation of many future information

acquisition and processing systems" (Work published in 1997).

2. 'Further the experiments have revealed the influence of the group consciousness field'. Research reports that the largest effects occurred when the group attempted to develop a resonant bond through meditations and chanting within the sacred site". (WEB SITE PROJECTS)

Our universal prayers and hymns have the universal aspect when addressed to the supreme Lord of all the world, and who is the eternal controller of the universe. For example: "May all be happy. May all be free from disease. May all realize what is good. May none be subject to misery." "May the world be prosperous and happy." Chanting of prayers may produce similar effects.

INTUITION - IS THE COMMON BASIS OF SCIENCE AND VEDANTA :

The ancient seers of India evolved a number of concepts on space, time, causality, matter, energy, the origin of our universe, and the limitations of reason by the technique of meditation which opened the door to higher intuition (gained iin Samadhi) or pure imagination that transcends reason but never contradicts it. Vivekananda never stood against reason; but pointed out that intuition is the natural culmination of reason. With the help of the power of "pure thought" or "intuitive leap", A. Einstein made strange postulates. The Japanese Nobel Physicist Hideki Yukawa intuitively predicted the existence of an unknown subatomic particle which was discovered in 1947 (12 years afterwards) and it was called "pion". Thus ancient intuition and modern research are perceptibly converging and appear definitely compatible.

Unity of Living and Non-living.

According to David Bohm 'life has no accident'. Life as a whole is a subtotal, as is nonliving, inanimate matter. But these two subtotals are only relatively separate. In fact, life and non-life constantly intermingle and enrich each other. This theory is also held by Ilya Prigogine (a Physicist). Further Bohm believes distinctions between the animate and inanimate are only abstraction, useful in some contexts and ultimately inaccurate. "Everything in the universe is alive" is a more useful description of reality. For him even the chemicals of the soil are living.

As a matter of fact scientists (J.A.Thomas, J.B.S.Haldane, Einstein etc) are now convinced that there is no sharp line of demarcation between living and non-living. Thus G.R.Harrison writes in his book (*What Man May Be*) - the more closely one examines the border line between living and non-living matter, the more one is forced to conclude that there is no boundary that is definite, no place where a breath of life comes sharply to inform matter".

CONCLUSIONS

So there must be a hidden force (one Supreme Deity or a cosmic Deity) 'one without a second, in which the worshipper and the worshipped, nay GOD and souls and the universe get merged and become one and indivisible,' that effects these various transformations though it does not come within the field of science and eludes all its instruments.

Ancient wisdom is not lagging behind in all these ideas: 'Brahman the Ultimate reality is behind the phenomenal world' is the Upanishadic statement. "Salutations to Brahman. Salutations to the God in the fire in the earth, in the plants, in speech. I offer my salutations to the Supreme Being the all pervading Spirit - Taittiriya Aranyaka (1,30) Further in Svetasvataropanishad - (II,17) Salutations to the God in the fire, who is in water, who has pervaded the whole universe, who is in the plants and who is in the trees. In short, we have in Isavasya Upanishad "All this, whatsoever moves in this universe, including the universe itself moving, is indwelt or pervaded or enveloped of clothed by the Lord".

Thus all forms of matter and all living beings seen as patterns of divine consciousness which is often described as 'pure or universal consciousness', ultimate reality' (called God or Paramatma) our ancient rishis (seers) sought reality surrounding us in a mist of illusion hiding 'real reality' - 'Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya'. The parallels between modern science and ancient wisdom are not confined to modern physics but can be extended with equal justification to biology and psychology. We can say today, with considerable confidence that the ancient Vedic wisdom provides the most philosophical background to our modern scientific theories.

"Can the data of mystical insight and that of the sciences of nature converge at some point?" It can. When we listen to Swami Vivekananda's explanation of ancient Vedanta in the language of today's physics.

PRACTICAL ASPECT OF PANCHA KOSHAS
(THE FIVE SHEATHS)

Dr. PADMAKAR VISHNU VARTAK

The Brahmananda Valli of Taittiriya Upanishad tells that Atman produced Akasha, Akasha produced Vayu, Vayu produced Agni, Agni produced Apa (Water), Apa produced earth (Prithvi), or solid matter. Plants grew from the earth, from plants grew the food and from the food life or Purusha is grown.

"The life, Purusha, is full of food and fluids, Anna and Rasa. This is its head, this is its right part, this is left part, this is the main part, while this tail part is for support".

All these statements of Taittiriya Upanishad are true to the modern science. Modern science agrees that all life is produced on the earth and from the earth. To begin with, the plants grew from the earth and then other forms of life were introduced. Plant is the original food of all life.

ANNAMAYA KOSHA

It is also true to the modern science that the living body is full of food and fluids. Medical and Biological sciences accept that a living body contains 60 to 70 per cent water and 30 to 40 per cent organic matter. Organic matter is nothing else but food, and water is the main part of the body juice.

If we take an example of man, his body really contains Anna and Rasa i.e. food and juices. This man means his living body as far as science and common man are concerned. This living body has one head, right and left parts, some base or tail end (Pucchha) and an important element or principle known as Life or Jeeva.

"This living physical body is produced due to food, it lives due to food, and it merges with food at its end." This statement is also true to science. Usually a couple produces an offspring but if that couple or any one of it does not get food and exhausts all his or her food stores in the body, then that couple will become unable to reproduce. Thus it is the food from which the physical body emerges.

This physical body lives and grows by eating food daily. If it does not get food it will not grow and will die soon. Thus food is important for life and its growth.

At the end the physical body merges with food. This statement is quite true. Usually all the dead bodies are consumed by other living things like microscopic organisms, plants, insects, and carnivorous animals, and birds. In the case of Hindus it is a fact that they burn the dead body and therefore it appears that the dead body will not merge with the food of other living beings. But on deep thinking it appears that after burning on the pyre, the five Mahabhutas which compose the body get separated and mix up with the Mahabhutas outside. These five Mahabhutas are the real food because plants grow from the Mababhutas and plants supply food to all the living beings. Thus at the end all the living bodies do merge with food.

PRANAMAYA KOSHA

So far all the statements of Taittiriya Upanishad are in compliance with the modern science. Taittiri further says that there is some other principle inside the living physical body. That inner principle in Pranamaya and it is the same as the outer physical body. It also has got different parts like the outer body and it is based on or supported by the earth.

Modern science does not know about this inner principle Prana, but on independent thinking we have to agree with Taittiri. Let us see how. The physical body is unable to move; even then it moves because of the inner motive force. Hence that inner motive force is called as Prana. Pra+Ana is the composition of the word Prana. Ana means to move. Ana means to make move. It is a causative form. Pra is a prefix showing force. Thus the thing which makes the physical body move forcefully is called as Prana. When that Prana goes away, the physical body becomes motionless. Therefore the principle named as Prana has to be accepted. It is full of Prana i.e. energy. This energy is developed by combining with Oxygen. Therefore Oxygen is called as Prana Vayu. Prana Vayu is a form of gas. Pranamaya means full of that gas. Because it is gaseous in nature it must have some base or some support. That support is given by the earth to the Pranamaya Kosha.

It is scientific to say that the atmosphere is based on the earth, because due to the gravitational attraction of the earth the atmosphere remains around the earth. Pranamaya being a part and parcel of the atmosphere, must have its base on the earth and it must have support of the gravitation of the earth. This reveals that the Pranamaya Kosha is influenced by the earth's gravitational force. Hence with the support of the earth and its gravitation Pranamaya can move about anywhere in the atmosphere but it cannot leave the earth and its atmosphere around.

According to Taittiriya Upanishad, Prana means a living force, a motive force

of any living thing. All the living beings live due to Prana.

MANOMAYA KOSHA

"Something different from the Pranamaya is present inside it. It is Manomaya. Manomaya is also similar to the external body. It has got different parts. Its base or support is Atharva of Angirasa."

Tharva means to go. Therefore 'Atharva' means not going i.e. steady, not moving. (Nirukta).

Angirasa means Rasa in Anga which means body-fluids. It also means the essence or extract of body or the main principle of body. The essence of body is Prana Vayu. Hence Angirasa means Prana Vayu. According to Shiksha Valli of Taittiriya Upanishad Vayu means BHUVA and Vayu keeps contact with the Earth below and SUVA, the SVARGA above. Thus Bhuva and Suva both relate to Vayu. This shows that Vayu means the atmosphere wrapped around the Earth. Thus Angirasa appears to be the atmosphere around the earth. Of this atmosphere, Angirasa, the part which is not moving is called as Atharva Angirasa. Modern science tells that the atmosphere extends upwards to one thousand kilometers height from the surface of oceans on the earth. The lower part of this atmosphere is unstable and winds flow constantly in this lower portion of the atmosphere. The upper part of the atmosphere is steady. This upper part is called as Suva. This Suva is called as Atharva Angirasa by Taittiri. This upper layer of atmosphere, Suva, is the support of Manomaya Kosha. It means that Manomaya can wander anywhere in this Suva.

Because this upper strata of the atmosphere, Suva, stays around the earth due to the gravitational attraction of the earth, Manomaya seated in it also gets affected by the earth's gravitational force. Manomaya cannot go beyond Suva overcoming the gravitation of the earth.

VIJNANAMAYA KOSHA

Different from this Manomaya there is a still inner Kosha. It is named as Vijnanamaya Kosha. It is full of Vijnana. This is also similar to the external body and possesses different parts like it. Its base or support is Maha.

Shiksha Valli Anuvak 5 states that Maha is the fourth Vyahruti added by the son of Mahachamasa to the previous three Vyahrutis namely Bhu, Bhuva, Suva. Maha is the space where the Moon resides. It is beyond Suva, the uppermost strata of the atmosphere. Naturally it appears to be the space outside the earth's gravitational attraction but inside the solar system. This Maha is the base or support of Vijnanamaya. This means that Vijnanamaya

Kosha can roam anywhere in Maha or the solar system.

ANANDAMAYA KOSHA

Still inside this Vijnanamaya but different from it, there is a principle named as Anandamaya. It is full of Ananda. It is similar to the external physical body and has different parts like it. It has the support of Brahman. Anandamaya is the most subtle of the five Koshas and has the capacity to move about anywhere in the Brahman. It has no limit even of the gravitation of the solar system. It can go to another solar system too.

Extending the same contemplation, we can say that Atman is still inside the Anandamaya Kosha and has the base of Para Brahman so that it can roam anywhere in Brahman even outside our galaxy which contains innumerable stars.

Taittiriya Upanishad does not say that the inner Koshas go outside the physical body of a living person, but Kathopanishad 1-2-21 suggests that the inner core (Atman) can go outside the living physical body when the person is fast asleep or is in a sitting posture. This inner core is named as Angushtha Matra Purusha in 2-1-12.

Aitareya Upanishad 2-2-4 tells that the inner core goes away from one body to another to take rebirth.

Taittiriya Upanishad is really marvellous, extraordinary, because it has given all the details about the five subtle bodies. People used to think about Pancha-Kosha theory that it is a fantastic idea, or is only theoretical; but I think that the concept of Pancha Koshas is not only theoretical but has a practical ground. I say this because accidentally or luckily I got an experience myself about the presence of these subtle bodies, and some evidence to prove the presence of them. Here I am presenting my experience and evidence therein.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES

In the month of July 1975 I read the news that the United States of America was going to launch a space-ship Viking I to the planet Mars. Viking was to travel 35 crores of miles to reach the planet and land on Mars and was to furnish first hand information about the planet. I was inspired by this news to try to get knowledge about Mars by way of Dhyana and Samadhi. I have been practising Yoga since 1956; that is since about eighteen years before this attempt. Since July 1975 I began to get Samadhi every day to get the information about Mars. On 10th of August 1975, on Sunday morning, I got the success. In my Samadhi I felt that I was standing on the ground of Mars. I saw that the soil there was red in colour just like in Konkan area of India. The ground was like that of the earth. There were no craters like those on the Moon. I could not see any human being

there. There were no beasts, birds, insects, plants, trees etc. There was no life. There was no water either running or stagnant, rivers or lakes and sea. I saw a totally dry river bed sand which was red in colour. Rocks on banks were also red in colour with dark or black patches which I felt were due to the ancient moss which died and blackened a few lacs of years ago. The colours in the sky there were just like those we see in the evening on our earth, red, yellow, green etc. Martian sky was bluish just like that of the earth. I felt high temperature. I experienced a cold breeze of air there so that I concluded that there is some water content in the atmosphere of Mars though actual water like rivers, seas etc was not present on Mars.

As soon as I came out of my Samadhi I wrote down all the information I gathered and kept is published in a form of twenty-one points in two magazines namely *Santakripa* June 1976 issue and *Dharmika* July 1976 issue.

On 21st July 1976, Viking I landed on Mars and began despatching reports. Gradually my twenty points got corroborated by Viking I. The twenty-first point of the moss on Mars got corroboration after eleven years in 1987.

This cent per cent success proved that the true information about Mars was really gathered by me before the scientific feat of Viking of U.S.A. Because my information is correct and true, it is logical to say that either I went to Mars or I saw Mars by clairvoyance just as scientists see through a telescope. But I had a feeling that I was standing on the ground of Mars. This feeling is more important which suggests that I must have gone to Mars. But how is it possible? My physical body was on this earth, in Pune, sitting in a Yogic posture. Then how could have I gone to Mars with that physical body? This problem can be solved only by accepting the presence of Pancha Koshas. As the Kathopanishad says, my physical body was sitting on the earth but the inner core, that Angushtha Matra Purusha was projected on Mars.

Is it only a fantastic idea? No. It has a proof which I got in my second Astral trip to Mars.

When the news flashed out in the newspapers about my travel to Mars by the Linga Deha and corroboration of my reports by the reports of Viking I, I was challenged by rationalists to see what will happen to Viking I and Viking II which was approaching Mars then. Therefore I again sat for meditation and went into Samadhi on 12th August 1976 at night. In this Samadhi I went to the planet Mars again. This time there was night on Mars. From Mars I saw the dark sky in which I could see the docking of Viking I and Viking II. I saw that both the spaceships were going from my right to my left. Viking I was

ahead. It showed down, stopped and came backwards to meet Viking II. I kept my report published in a Marathi newspaper *Tarun Bharat* dated 22nd August 1976. I sent one copy to the American Embassy at Bombay. The then director of American Embassy said that there is no plan of such docking of Vikings. But on 7th Sept. 1976 the news from NASA flashed out in the papers about this programme of docking of Vikings. This news corroborated all my descriptions. The directions of the moving Vikings also came true. I had published that the Vikings were moving from my right to my left side. Pasadena news stated that they were going from east to west. In the maps we always plot east on right side and west on left side. The scientists followed the directions, east and west, on Mars and not of the earth, because they had a map of Mars in front of them. Thus the directions published by NASA concurred with my directions. Therefore it is a natural conclusion that I was really standing on Mars. It is logical to accept this as an evidence to show that my Linga Deha had gone to Mars.

On 27th August 1977, I performed my third experiment of Astral Travel. This time I went to Jupiter, a planet about at least fifty crores of miles away from the earth. In my Samadhi I went to Jupiter. I saw many things and came back. All this happened within fifteen minutes in Dhyana. I sat for Dhyana at 13.00 p.m. and I got up at 13.15 p.m. Whatever I saw there on Jupiter, I wrote down immediately and I published my report in The Indian Express, Tarun Bharat, Shree weekly and magazine Santa-Kripa. I sent my reports to the then Prime Minister and the President of India. Whatever I saw with my own eyes on Jupiter I wrote down in eighteen points which were published in 1977. In 1979 a space-ship Voyager launched by U.S.A. approached Jupiter and gave reports which corroborated my ten points out of the published eighteen points. Ten points were correct but the remaining eight points were not wrong; they were not seen by Voyager. That means that I had got first hand information about the planet much before Voyager could go near the planet.

My report stated my feeling that I was floating in the skies of Jupiter and I could see six half Moons there. These half Moons were vertically half; such vertical half moon is never seen from the earth. I have stated that the bright part of the Moon was on my right side. Voyager did send a photograph of a half moon which was vertical but its illuminated part was on the left side. Why exactly the reverse happened? Why this mirror image difference? The reason is that I had seen the Moon from Jupiter itself while Voyager saw the Moon from the earth's side from a distance of some million miles, while travelling towards Jupiter. Therefore the Moon stood between me and the Voyager,

so that my right side concurred with the left side of Voyager.

This fact gives a direct proof that I was present on Jupiter bodily. That body was not the physical body of mine but the Linga Deha of me. My physical body was seated in a Yogic posture on this earth, but the Linga Deha was projected on Jupiter.

Which was this inner body which went to Jupiter? Modern science has no concept about it, but the Indian ancient science has full knowledge about it. Generally it is called as Linga Deha. Linga means a mark of identification. Physical body has identity marks, similarly this Linga Deha has identity marks. But Linga Deha is a vague term. It is called as Angushtha Matra Purusha in Kathopanishad. Taittiriya Upanishad divides it further into four Koshas and describes the supports of them. Accordingly we can classify these four Koshas, depending on my own experience. In my experiments I was outside the gravitational attraction of the earth, but was on Mars or Jupiter which are situated in the field of attraction of the Sun or the solar system. This region or space is named as Maha, by the sage Taittiri following the son of Mahachamasa. Maha is said to base Vijnanamaya Kosha. So it appears that the Deha which was projected from within me on to Mars or Jupiter was this Vijnanamaya Kosha of mine.

Thus without knowing or without any intention I got the proof of the Pancha Koshas, in my Samadhi.

Every day I practise Samadhi. In one of my Samadhis, in 1980, I could see a man on a planet in a neighbouring solar system. The nearest Sun is four light-years distant from the earth. That means light takes four years to travel from it to the earth. But I could go there and come back in a fraction of a second, in my Samadhi. In this case I went there in another solar system with the help of my Anandamaya Kosha which has a capacity to fly anywhere in the Brahman or in our Galaxy, according to Taittiriya Upanishad.

Thus it is proved that Taittiriya Upanishad has written the true facts and the five subtle bodies or Pancha Koshas do really exist in a person. ■



VEDAS AND THEIR ABILITY TO CURE ILLNESS

K. RAMESHKUMAR

All knowledge is enshrined in the Vedas. Knowledge confers happiness on men. Both higher knowledge and lower knowledge are resorted to equally by men Man resorts to higher knowledge for the sake of strengthening the mind. Man resorts to lower knowledge also for the purpose of getting rid of physical illness and to gain health. It is indeed our experience that we gain mental strength and well being by the repetition of the Vedic mantras.

There is not even an iota of doubt that the invisible power of the mantras pervades our minds and bodies and hence the subduing of all sickness The Vedas not only possess the power that is the cause of happiness in our mundane existence but also the required power to subdue all sickness. We have to learn necessarily what it is and how it happens.

The Vedas are the collection of insight into the lives of illustrious ascetics. The ascetics had visualized the mantras. But they are not the composers of the mantras. They had experienced the import of the mantras. Hence we cannot say that the Vedas were produced The learned people hence hold that the Vedas are not human utterances. It amounts to that the Vedas are not produced by any human agency. In the introduction to the commentary on the *Rgveda* Sāyanacārya states the authority for this. Even though the pot, cloth and other materials are not self-luminous it does not contradict the self-luminosity of the Sun, Moon and other heavenly bodies. Even though men cannot mount their own shoulders let the Vedas be accepted as having unobstructed power. In the same way as it makes known the other matter let it have the power to make known everything.

By nature men are prompted to think deeply about extraordinary power that is the cause of wonder and the cause of rejoice. One desires to think and remember a thing that gives rise to wonder and makes one feel delighted When this thought process or remembrance is continuous then it becomes contemplation or worship. One gains knowledge by

resorting to this extraordinary natural power. The Vedas have hymns explaining the means of acquiring such extraordinary power. These powers which have become the governing forces of the universe generate wonder in us The heat of fire, the luster and beauty has made all men to think. By comparing oneself with the effects that produce in us faith in them we know that our own body is perishable. Hence men made efforts to make the body sustain for a longer period The fruit of that effort was the hymns like *Sarvaroga-śamanasūktam* and *Āyussūktam* etc.

When they were making efforts to remove the physical ailment, they learnt about the ailment of the mind. The following hymn indicates that they made effort to remove that.

भद्रन्नो अपिवातय मनः (RV. x.20,1)

Sayana in his commentary states that by repeating this hymn we will get free from ficklemindedness and the mind becomes firm. Moreover they have assigned one presiding deity for each one of the diseases. The presiding deity of mental illness like epilepsy is Lord Śiva 'त्रयम्बकं यजामहे' the *Mrtyuñjayamantra* is stated to be the antidote for such diseases.

Men resort to powers beyond the range of their senses by means of the above mentioned hymns. Minds of men not satisfied did not rest with this. Then medicine was also begun to be used along with the mantras. It was the cause for the origin of Āyurveda. We will be able to notice many references for this in the *Atharvaveda*. Man started using the medicine along with the mantra for healing the wounds and to unite the broken bones. In the twelfth hymn in the fourth kanda there is reference to the consecration of the '*lāksodakakvātha*' with the hymn रोहण्यसि रोहण्यस्थ्नश्छिन्नस्य रोहणी रोहयेदमरुन्धति AV. iv. 12, 1 and sprinkling on the wound There is another reference to the consecration of ghee and milk with this mantra and making the wounded person drink it Moreover it states that the sprinkling on the wound is done when the asterism Rohiṇī is ruling. We notice similar applications for treating poisons. Incantation of the hide of dead deer or the bits of fallen *lodhra* tree are done with the hymns beginning

ब्रह्मणो जज्ञे प्रथमो दशशीर्षों दशास्यः ।
स सोमं प्रथमः पपौ स च कारारसं विषम्

AV iv. 6, 1 and

वारिदं वारयातै वरणावत्यामधि ।
तत्रामृतस्यासिक्तं तेना ते वारये विषम् AV. iv. 7, 1

and sprinkled on the person afflicted by poison. Here the intention of the mention of the *lodhra* tree fallen of its own accord seems to imply that it is for the gradual gain of heat.

The Āyurveda treats of surgical acts also. It is mentioned that the Aśvinīdevatās were engaged on the advice of Agastya for fixing iron foot in the place of the broken foot of a woman. The earth collected from an anthill was used for treating poison The hundredth hymn in the sixth kāṇḍa of the *Atharvaveda* is explicit in this regard. We think that the earth from an anthill is alluded in the expression antibiotic used in allopathic system of medicine. There were the applications of the mantras for remedying the barrenness in young age (AV. iii. 23) and the delay in the delivery of a child (AV.i.2) etc.

We opine that the knowledge of the Supreme Being is the cause of the subduing of all ailments. But the body is the primary means for the practice of the mantras. One should have perfect health for the sake of carrying on the activities of the body that is the instrument for every act. Hence it was thought about the subduing of ailments in the body. Our ancient sages had made effort in this way to get rid of the ailment of mundane existence by means of relief from physical ailments.

(Translated by Prof. N. Gangadharan)

HEALING POWER OF WATER

The medicative powers of water that were known to Vedic Aryans have only recently been discovered by modern people.

Within the waters - Soma has told me –

are all medicines that heal,
and Agni, who blesses all.
The waters contain all medicines.

(R.I. 23-20; A)

Only in recent times the importance of hydropathy has been recognised.

All religion is to be based upon morality and personal purity is to be counted superior to Dharma.

-Swami Vivekananda

TOWARDS HIM

(A Vedic reflection for the new millennium on Origin of the Universe, Evolution, Time-Space)

PROBODH CHANDRA ROY

THE MANTRA

I prostrate before those who spoke before me on creation; I prostrate before those who inspired a rhythmic life; I prostrate before HIM who is eternally continual. Yet, He is by One-self. Who know HIM? R.V.3/46/3

I would confine myself to this *Rik* only, although there are ten *Riks* in the Rig Veda in ten *Mandalas*.

THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

Millennium according to Oxford dictionary, means a further period of thousand years of great happiness for everyone. Keeping this in mind we look forward to welcome the new queen of Time and in this phase of change over let us look back at the withering lady, what she leaves for us upon which the new queen of Time will reign. To the populace of India, it is the wisdom of the Vedas which gives out rhythm of life, which is about the mystery of creation, about the mystery of the Universe, about the mystery of our existence and its continual to eternity, but before we embark upon this theme let us have a rummage of the scientific wisdom towards the origin of the Universe, Evolution, Time-space.

THE UNIVERSE

The Universe can be best described as the total of all matter, energy, space, that man is capable of experiencing.

THE CREATION THEORY

The theory on creation according to current views are the general theory of relativity, that covers the force of gravity. Based on this theory matter would mean a specialized form of energy which has the attributes of mass and extension in space-time. And the quantum theory, explains the attractive force which acts between nucleons to bind them together to form matter. With these two theories science looks forward to probe into the mystery of creation. The Universe as is known, comes at a point of singularity when the mass and volume of the matter come to zero degree. This creates an enormous heat within itself

thereby causing a violent burst into the zero space, the heat of which rises to 10^{46} degrees, thus setting out the beginning of time-space. Outcome from the burst were forces, which by force-particles form the elementary particles and anti-particles. The forces are;

i. Gravitational force, which states that every particle in the Universe attracts every other particle with a force.

ii. Electromagnetic force, it operates on electrically charged particles.

iii. Weak nuclear force, it works for the decay of all particles.

iv. Strong nuclear force, it binds the quarks together in the nucleus of atom.

The substances that go to form the elementary particles are called quarks and are found in pairs with three corresponding antiparticles that form the basis of all particles and can be described by their properties; these are up, down, top, bottom, charm and strange, different arrangements of three elementary particles could provide all the properties of all the others.

THE CREATION

The accepted theory on creation is the theory of Big Bang but no theory can fully explain the mystery of creation but merely provides an account of the events that took place at a distant past. The Universe as it stands, began at a point of singularity; when the explosion took place the violent burst threw forth the cosmic bodies, that cause to set up the beginning of time-space. After the burst the heat generated out of the fusion lasted for a minute and thereafter started falling, this caused the appearance of electron and anti-electron. In the next few minutes the temperature fell further. With continuous fall nuclear gas began producing neutrinos, they also began to combine together to form the nucleus of proton, neutron and electron forming the atom.

THE EVOLUTION

Galaxies and Stars, Sun and Planets were formed out of the nuclear force which is compressed as a result of gravitational field between the constituents and started spinning from the pull of gravity.

THE TIME-SPACE

That which distinguishes sequential events from simultaneous events that separate moments from one another, no two moments can exist nor any series of movements can co-exist at the same time. The present is the mark of actuality, the future as a mark of potentiality and the past of sub-latency. The ancient view is khan, that which is just gone by but there was a concept of unity, a holistic relation, the unity of all things, the unity of existence, the

relation among events is interrelated, the holistic relation does govern the weaving. Time-Space are on dimensional fixed co-ordinates, time is a record of events, space is created as the Universe expands, as such there is no flow of time nor space does flow.

THE EVENTUAL GOAL

The eventual goal of science is to provide a single theory that will describe everything in the Universe. Science has yet to find out a quantum theory of gravity so as to bind all the four forces together to make the story of creation complete but this gravity is posing a problem. Newton discovered the Law of Gravitation but it was replaced by Albert Einstein. The theory of relativity states that the space is curved in such a way that a gravitational field is set up. The modern science does say that the theory is incomplete since the gravitational attraction in matter is not noticeable. The basic science halts here, but I will resume the Vedic version to give a full account of the Universe, which surpasses physical science and reveals the mystery of creation.

THE AVIKARSHAK

Let us consider Newton's Law of Motion No. 3 which states that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. Since it is possible in the quantum theory for the ordinary laws of science to hold everywhere in the beginning of time, let us in this context stretch our imagination a little further so as to project the zero space, a singularity point of the Universe, in terms of quantum mechanics. At singularity point when volume of matter recorded zero degree that caused the burst rising the heat to 10^{46} degrees, which must have caused a tremendous anti thrust or negative energy which remains at the core point, spinless, formless but exerts a force around which all cosmic bodies are revolving. The moot point, the pull is the gravity arising out of anti thrust or negative energy and that it causes the cosmic body spinning because of the thrust in one direction and the pull from the anti thrust or negative energy on the other. As they are revolving around the core point, they are coming close to the zero space, nearer they come the pull becomes stronger, the cosmic bodies are moving in one direction just to cause another point of singularity for its own existence towards eternity. The great Universal energy, both positive and negative, is supposed to be the power of the Avikarshak, in Vedic terms `Asat' (non-existence) and `Sat' (existence), eternally continual and flows from beyond the point of time-space. In the Tika and Bhasya of the third mandala of Rig Veda rendered by Sri Anirvan (1896-1978), it states that, in the midst of voidness, in the deep high sky, beyond the heavenly bodies, beyond time-space. He reveals Himself, immeasurable,

incomprehensible. He blooms to sprinkle the Radiant Rays all over the space, surpassing all energy, all limit, all grace and eternally continual. Yet He is by One-self. Who will know Him? (RV.3/46/3).

This is what the ancients call it; *Anoraniyan-mahatomahiyan.* (Katha Upanishad I.ii.20)

THE EQUATION

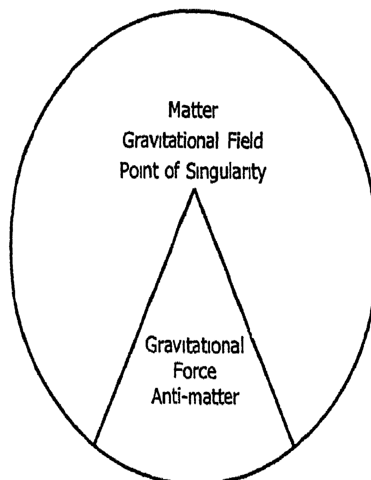
The gravitational field consists of total matter in the space equals to total anti matter. Therefore the weight of the universe is zero as matter and anti matter cancels each other and in Vedic terms manifest and the un-manifest, can be expressed in the diagram.

This writing is not for presenting a theory on creation of Universe but while reading Tika and Bhasya of 3rd Mandala of Rig Veda rendered by Sri Anirvan between the years 1951 and 1958 at Lohaghat, Almora, Himalayas, it reminds us that the ancients had reached the Truth. Though science is searching the same Truth but something somewhere intervenes them, yet, from the philosophical point of view it is the intuitive mind that reaches there. I would state that all of us have to return to the state of consciousness one day to transform our consciousness into conscious energy to continue the creation.

Before I conclude, I would recall one saying of Sri Anirvan, who said that the Vedas of its own will reappear in the 21st century and there will be new Kavis to sing the Hymns once again and they will bring down the God here. The God of Tapas had been ignited by the previous and will be again so ignited by the present day Kavis. Let them bring the glorious Gods.

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ORIGIN OF THE UNIVERSE AND CONCEPT OF TIME

Dr. SUBHASH K. DESAI

When we think about time, there are two primary questions before us (1) Whether time is an entity (2) Whether time is measurable. Scientist's answer is affirmative. Time is an entity and it is measurable.

It is measured in two values, minimum and maximum. The former depends on the shortest distance that is called Plank's time and the latter depends on maximum distance.

As the period of movement of a pendulum becomes a measurement of time in mechanical clock, energy difference between two levels of cesium atoms is used to derive standard time. These ideas of standard time came from those who believed in standards.

In adopting this method of measurement of time, European scientists never thought of Nature in particular, the motions of planets. Thus their measures became artificial. But Indian and Greek thinkers gave importance to planetary motions. Ancient Indians developed concept of time through periodic motions of nearby objects like the Moon, Jupiter and Sun. Their lunar calendar was based on the motion of the Moon and solar calendar based on the apparent motion of the sun. Jupiter was considered as standard because after every 60 years, it comes to an exact position in relation to the Sun and Earth.

It will be relevant to refer the concept of Time and how it was measured in Indian scriptures. The study was very systematic and revealed in religious books, such as Bhagawat Puran, (The reference of atom (अणु परमाणु) has nothing to do with the present scientific concept of atom). Indian concept of atom is the smallest particle that cannot be divided. And time required for sunlight to cover that particle is called atom-time. (अणु काल)

Time Scale is studied in detail in Bhagawat Puran. Puran means whatever was existing in the past. The folk stories since the time of Rugved are recorded in such Puran - as. The first Puran was written by Krishna Dvaipayan in 1000 B.C.

The Time Scale referred in Bhagawat Puran is as follows :

2	Parmanu	=	1 Anu
3	Anu	=	1 Trasrenu
3	Trasrenu	=	1 Truti
100	Truti	=	1 Vedh
1	Vedh	=	1 Lava
1	Lava	=	1 Nimish
3	Nimish	=	1 Moment
5	Moments	=	1 Kashta
15	Kashta	=	1 Laghu
15	Laghu	=	1 Nadika

2	Nadika	=	1 Muhurt
6/7	Nadika	=	1 Yug of Prahar
4	Prahar	=	1 Day or Night
15	days	=	1 Paksha (Shukla or Krishna)
2	Paksha	=	1 Month
1	Month	=	Pitra's 1 Day or Night
2	Months	=	1 Rutu
6	Months	=	Dakshinayan or Uttarayan
1	Ayan	=	1 Day or Night of Swarglok
12	Months	=	1 year

Human life is calculated of 100 years. The Time Scale of year is in reference with the apparent movements of Sun. Hence it is called Samwatsar. Time calculated with reference to Moon is called as Anuwatsar and with Planet Jupiter Pariwatsar. With reference to Nakshatra Edawatsar. The year of 360 days, this is referred in Bhagawat Puran. Third Skandha lith Adhyaya. There is also the concept of 4 Yugas.

Krat Yug	=	4000 Years
Treta Yug	=	3000 Years
Apar Yug	=	2000 Years
Kali Yug	=	1000 Years

Apart from it Sandhya, Time and Yugant Kal (सध्यांश). Sandhyansh of 2000 years. Four Yuga cycle is calculated of 12 thousand years. A single day of Brahma means one thousand Yugas Chakras. The night of Brahma is also of the same period. The creation and distribution of the Universe takes place in the period of one day and night of Brahma. The half life of Brahma is called as Pararth (परार्ध). Now half of Pararth is over.

Dr. Jayant Narlikar, a noted astrophysicist of IUCA, said in an interview published on 10th Dec. 1989 in 'Independent'. The concept of the year of Brahma and the present Time Scale of the Universe 3.33 Billion years is very similar. For Indian vedic visionary people Science was a part of Religion.

Bhaskaracharya had introduced time and its method of measurement. Time was thought as relative by Nagarjuna. Not only time was measured by ancient Indians, but space also was measured. Trigonometry was invented in India. Similarly Greeks invented figures and geometry. Plato stressed the importance of geometry.

When philosophers in the past said 'you cannot step twice into the same river, for fresh waters are ever flowing'. Nicholes of Cusa said that eternity unfolds in time. Time is looked upon as made of particles, and so adding of time is and enrichment of eternity.

Scientist David Bohm argues, we cannot understand it except from the stand-point of the ground of eternity. If we attempt to make time self referential, it is going to lead to chaos. Past and future are always present as overtones of the present. We may be remembering the past but the memory is present. The future might be simply the depths of the inner world of the implicate order which is and which is unfolding.

For Illya Prigogine : Time is creation. The future is just not there. We reach an idea of time different from the classical Aristotalian sub-division of past, present and future along a straight line, with the present as point separating the past and the future. The classical concept is very difficult to hold because the present would be only a point. But if the present is only a point how can it really separate the past and future?

In a sense it is past and the future which are there, not the present.

Finally you conclude in the manner of Leibniz who said that world of instantaneous consciousness is also unconscious.

But by including the second law of thermodynamics scientist come to a concept of time in which the past is there, the present has a finite duration, and the future is not yet there. It is a concept of nature very similar to biological time.

Buddhist cosmology claims that some humans experience of multidimensional consciousness where, by contrast to three dimensional Cartesian consciousness, it's possible to convert time into space. If you stand back for enough, then instead of seeing time and the arrow of time with its flow you perceive them simultaneously as conscious, present experience.

Let us see what scientist Illya Prigogine says about it. For him in the Bernard instability we see long range correlations in the convective currents which arise in a heated thin layer of liquid, here time is transformed into space.

Serge Pahout has said that 'time here becomes space'. Time is something much more complex than the number you read on your watch. Of course, it has to keep track of the watch, but there is much more to it than that.

In their recent work on Dynamical System, Illya Prigogine and his colleague Misbra have introduced the idea of internal time. As we are living in a single universe, this internal time is not independent of astronomical time, things have to be synchronized. Therefore, the change of the average internal time is related to the time of planets, to the time of the watch. Space is realization or related to one vision, of internal time. By describing the internal, we also emphasize the autonomy of human beings.

For Stephen Hawking, time and space and everything else are really in us. They are just mathematical models that we have made to describe the universe. It is really meaningless to talk about being outside because we are inside the system.

Hawking explains that we chose to measure time from the Big-Bang. But the Big-Bang is a point of space time, rather like any other point of space-time.

Then what happens before the Big-Bang? The scientific answer is, it is like asking what happens at the point one mile north pole. The universe is completely self contained. It does not have any beginning or end, it does not have any creation or destruction.

Plato said Time is a moving image of eternity. A number of mystics in different times and mystical experiences among which the experience of timelessness is very common. This experience of timelessness is thought as a victory of man over human body which is perishable; what remains as permanent or immortal is the soul. When a mystic realizes the immortality he naturally ascends the boundaries of mortality of physical existence. Thus the experience of timelessness is nothing but experience of immortality.

One may challenge the validity of such experience. Dr. Radhakrishnan answers that the mystics were from different places and different periods of history, with different background, still they had this common universal experience.

The current theory about the origin of the universe, which is widely although not universally accepted is known as the Big-Bang. Simply stated, it holds that there existed a ball or protomatter, which for some reason or cause not yet explained exploded with inconceivable energy and that during the first few milliseconds half of the work of creation had been accomplished. All of the material that was

to form all galaxies was contained in that original ball of protomatter. This is believed to have occurred some 10 - 20 billions of years ago. Science holds that there is evidence of such a catastrophic beginning of the universe in certain radiations which pervade all space.

No doubt many people have asked questions such as -

When did the Big-Bang take place? or did space exist before the Big-Bang? Did space, energy and time come into being at that moment? Does science seek the beginning of time or does it seek the timelessness?

Though these and similar questions are created by science, the line between science and mysticism has grown thin.

IS THERE AN EDGE TO THE UNIVERSE?

Scientists are interested in early universe. Rather everyone is interested to know where it comes from and how the universe arose. Scientists are reasonably confident that they know the history of the universe upto one second after the Big-Bang. What happens before that is much more speculative. The part that one is most interested in is precisely this one second.

For Stephen Hawking there does not really have to be any beginning to the universe. It might be that space and time together are like the surface of the earth, but with two dimensions, with degrees of latitude playing the role of time. In that sense, you can say that the surface of the earth starts off at a single point at the north pole and as you move downwards in latitude the circle gets bigger, and that corresponds to the universe expanding. When you get down to the equator, you reach a maximum size and that corresponds to the universe reaching a maximum size.'

For scientists it becomes very important to know whether there is or not an edge to space-time? This becomes important because if there is an edge, somebody has to decide what should happen at the edge.

Scientists have no explanatory principle for the edge of space-time otherwise, scientist could solve the equation.

Here some scientists use the concept of God like a principle synonymous with laws of the universe. Of course there would not be a connection of this God with morality or a moral being from scientific view.

There is no evidence either way, for there being an edge or there being no edge to the universe. For the present scientific conclusions this remains a mystery or the unknown laws of nature. Similarly, present science cannot go further to answer the

question what happened before time began?

CONCLUSION

These questions lead us outside the realm of science and then we are in the realm of religion and philosophy. At this point we learn that the universe cannot be understood through one single approach such as the religious, the scientific or the philosophical. This would be like dividing the universe into compartments which would be impossible.

We have to accept that religion, science and philosophy are not separate things in themselves. Rather they are the various approaches to the universe according to the nature of the minds that make the approach. Among the millions of minds that seek to know there are some with a religious bent, some with a scientific bent and others with philosophical bent. Each is going to seek for knowledge or truth according to his own nature. As it is said, `the path is one, the ways must vary with the pilgrims or as it is said in Indian tradition, 'all rivers ultimately lead to the ocean'.

In the words of Swami Vivekananda 'science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity among phenomenal it would stop from further progress, because it would have reached the goal. Thus Chemistry could not progress further when it would discover one element and out of which all others could be made. Physics would stop when it would be able to fulfil its service in discovering one energy of which all others are but manifestations, and the science of religion becomes perfect when it would discover Him, who is the one life in a Universe of death. He who is the constant basis of an ever changing world. One who is the only soul of which all souls are but delusive, manifestations. Thus it is, through multiplicity and duality the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no further. This is the goal of all science. All science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run. Manifestation and not creation is the world of science today and the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language and with further light from the latest conclusions of science.

This thought of an Indian seer was expressed in the Parliament of Religions in Chicago on 19th September, 1983. About a century back when science was in an earlier stage without the theory of relativity or big-bang or black-holes.

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MATTER AND ENERGY - VEDANTIC CONCEPTS

P.V.N. RAMANATHAN

INTRODUCTION

The philosophers of ancient India had conceived and pictured the world of matter as being built out of five fundamental elements, *Prithvi* (the earth), *Ap* (the water), *Tejas* (the light), *Vayu* (the air), *Akasa* (the ether / space). This concept of five elements has pervaded all Hindu systems of philosophy. The ancient Hindus also speak of *anu* or atom. But the exact correlation of the concept of atoms with the five elements is not clear. Also, the significance as well as the basic reasons for the postulation of the five elements has remained obscure.

The concept of atoms as postulated by Dalton does not fit in with the concept of the five elements. The Daltonian atom which for a long time was considered as uneradicable, indestructible and non-transmutable, has been smashed by fast energy particles. Also radio-active transmutations result in the production of new elements from disintegrating parent elements. The rapid advances in physics and chemistry in the earlier part of this century has given birth to ideas which are completely at variance with our classical notions of atoms, matter, energy, particles, waves, place and time.

Energy, which was all along thought of as having a continuous structure is now, found to be occurring in discrete packets or quanta. Further, energy has now been demonstrated to be identical with matter. There is a definite equivalence in the interconversion of matter and energy.

Says Heizenburg, "All elementary particles are made of the source substance, matter and energy. They are the various forms with energy, must assume to become matter. Energy is not only the force which keeps everything in motion, it is also the basic stuff out of which the world is made"...."Though this looks strange and unbelievable, this idea has led to the release of enormous amount of energy by the atomic bomb." To quote Einstein, "there is no essential difference between mass and energy. Energy has mass and mass represents energy. Instead of the two

conservation laws we have only one–the conservation of mass and energy."

We have two realities - matter and energy. Given a particle of matter we could picture in a naive way that there is a surface of the particle where it ceases to exist and its gravitational field commences. Field represents energy and matter represents mass. We know that matter represents vast sources of energy and energy represents matter. Therefore the greatest part of energy is concentrated in matter while the field surrounding matter encompasses energy although in a comparatively small measure. We can therefore say that matter exists where the concentration of energy is the greatest and the field where the concentration of energy is relatively small. There is no sense in regarding matter and field as entirely different from each other.

PANCIKARANA

In the light of these ideas let us examine the significance of the five elemental theory of the Hindus. A piece of matter must be located somewhere; it must have a habitat. The concept of ether / space *(akasha)* provides this habitat for matter. Of the remaining four elements, three, namely *prithvi, ap* and *vayu* (the earth, the water and the air) symbolize the three states of aggregation of matter, solid, liquid and gas. *Prithvi* symbolizes the solid state, *ap* symbolizes the liquid state and *vayu* the gaseous state. What then, about the fourth and fifth elements *Tejas* (the light) and *akasha* (the ether)?

In a passage in Taittriya Upanishad, it is stated -

Pranoh va annam, prane sariram prathistitam

In this passage *annam* represents matter and *prana* represents energy. When translated this passage means "Energy is established in matter and matter is established in energy". Though *Tejas* literally means light energy, in the present context it stands for fire or thermal energy. Thus the Upanishad lays down in unmistakable and forcible terms the equivalence of matter and energy. From this it would be clear that having posited - the *akasa* as habitat of matter they realised the identity or equivalence of matter and energy and represented energy by the symbol *Tejas* (the light). We see that in formulating the five elemental theory they recognised *akasa* (the space) as a habitat for matter, realised the equivalence of matter and energy. Also realising the existence of matter in three states of aggregation, they posited the remaining four elements (the light, the earth, the water and the air).

THE MACROCOSMIC SUBTLE BODY

Now we shall delineate how according to the *sastra,* the whole inanimate universe

and the biological systems emanate from the Atman. Originally i.e., before the creation there is only the vacuum-like Atman and nothing else. Or, anticipating the creation, one should more appropriately say that this seemingly vacuous Atman contained in His womb the entire spectrum of vibrations of the forthcoming complex universe. The foremost emanation was the pentad of the elements the *Akasa,* the *Vayu,* the *Tejas,* the *Ap* and the *Prithivi* - generally translated by many people as the ether, the air, the light, the water and the earth respectively. These are not the earth etc., that we perceive now. These are PURE FIELDS each having only a single characteristic and therefore called a *Tanmatra*, meaning **Only that.** For e.g., the characteristic of the *Akasa tanmatra* is only sound (*Sabda*). Similarly the others. They are all enumerated in the table below :

TANMATRA	CHARACTERISTIC
Akasa (Ether)	*Sabda* (Sound)
Vayu (Air)	*Sparsa* (Touch)
Tejas (Light)	*Rupa* (Sight)
Ap (Water)	*Rasa* (Taste)
Prithivi (Earth)	*Gandha* (Odour)

This pentad is the very first and the subtlest manifestation of the Atman. This is inert. But since the Atman is inside this, it functions as an animate individual whose soul is the Atman just as a person with an inert body functions now because of his soul. The name of this animation is *Hiranyagarbha.*

He does all further creation through the process of mixing of these pure fields in a very complicated and well-defined scheme. The first stage of mixing is a simple "physical mixing", and the second stage is a "chemical mixing", to use metaphors from the present day science. What emanate from the first mixing are the Macrocosmic (*samasti*) Prana, the Macrocosmic Mind and the Macrocosmic Subtle Organs in that order telescopically, each containing the previous one `within' it. These are produced by Him out of the essence of the *tanmatras*. This set of the 19 mixed categories may be visualized as a colossal system of whirlpools in the field of the *tanmatras.*

THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

The next stage of mixing them "chemically" is Pancikarana. The process is as follows : The *Akasa tanmatra* mixes with the *Vayu tanmatra,* the resultant having the two properties of sound and touch - corresponding to the air around us. The *Akasa* and the *Vayu tanmatras* mix with the *Tejas tanmatra* giving rise to the fire we experience now, whose properties are sound, touch and sight. Then the first 3

tanmatras mix with the taste field *Ap* giving rise to the water we have now with the 4 properties of sound, touch, sight and taste. Finally all the first 4 *tanmatras* mix with the odour field *Prithivi* giving rise to the solid earth having all the properties of sound, touch, sight, taste and odour. With this telescopic mixing, we have the whole universe. (*Tai. Sankara Bhasya 2.1*). Only these products of the chemical mixing are perceptible to the senses and not the products of the physical mixing which constitute the macrocosmic entities of the previous paragraph.

Thus, the intrinsic nature of the universe is described by the Vedas in terms of the *tanmatra* pentad. It would not be out of place to digress a little to point out the advantage in this theory. Attempts in the western science to understand the nature of the Universe are based on divisions and subdivisions of matter. They have been shifting from the molecules to the atoms, from the atoms to the nuclei, from the nuclei to the particles and so on endlessly. While the desideratum of this division process was to give a holistic explanation of our sense perception of the world, the sub-divisions - the so-called building blocks of the universe - have been apparently moving away from this desideratum. The emerging pictures each time are becoming more complex and not simpler as we hoped them to be. Since nobody can give a guarantee that further division is impossible, there is no finality in the hypothesis and so the theories have become time-dependent. On the other hand, Vedic postulates of the *tanmatra* pentad fields corresponding to the five sense perceptions as the root ingredients of the Universe have a finality in the theory since there is nothing like a sixth sense. It is holistic too.

This apart, when the earth is fully ready for the next development, the plant life emerges. Some of the plants later reproduce themselves through their seeds and some others directly. The Vedas are emphatic that the plants came earlier and the seeds later. (Ch. 6.3.1).

The macrocosmic entities, the Prana, the Mind, the Senses and the Action Faculties and the gross universe of the foregoing paragraphs constitute the Second Manifestation of the Atman on the cosmic scale. This is the Second Soul called *Virat.* The first three categories constitute His subtle body and the gross universe His gross body.

THE EVOLUTION OF ANIMAL LIFE

Next in the order of creation is the animal kingdom. Some western theorists of evolution talk of order out of chaos, survival of the fittest, inheritance of acquired characteristics and so on, while some others are talking of their critiques. For the Hindus. the statement that the life

has emerged from the system of inert particles in chaos in accordance with some probability laws is not acceptable. They have the well-reasoned and experiential conviction that any action can only follow the desire for its result, the will to do it and the appropriate planning. Is the chaos out of which life is supposed to have emerged continuing to exist or has it ceased to exist? If it is continuing, life should be emerging out of it even now; but we do not notice any such thing. If it has ceased to exist, then it should have come into existence once upon a time, because, any existence which ends in time should have also a beginning in time. This implies that for the triggering of chaos some sentient agent must pre-exist. i.e., granting that life emerged from chaos, the sastras say that all animals have come from *Virat* while He Himself has emanated from the Atman.

This *Virat* splits Himself into male and female individuals of all the species without damaging His own intrinsic nature. Indeed, this is an a sexual production of sexed individuals with gross bodies consisting of the sense organs, the ears, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the nose and the gross action organs, the mouth, the hands, the feet, the anus and the penis / the vagina. While these gross bodies come from the earth which is a part of *Virat's* gross body, the corresponding subtle faculties come from His subtle body. The gross bodies coagulate as in crystallization in the watery earth according to the information content of the corresponding subtle bodies.

It is only the *Virat's* subtle faculties that are acting locally in the gross bodies of the individuals. This may be described figuratively as follows : *Virat's* subtle body is the system of macrocosmic whirlpools in the *tanmatra* fields. This in turn contains small microcosmic vortices carrying all the inherent properties of the macrocosm, but with much less power, always floating in the plenum of *Virat*. While He is the cosmic hologram, the individuals are its tidbits. They are sparks in the blazing fire of *Virat*, with their little powers and little freedoms.

HOLISM IN THE VEDIC APPROACH

Thus we see that ultimately everything has emanated from the Atman and so nothing is different from it. There is nothing anywhere anytime not pervaded by it. It pervades the mind and it gets the ability to observe; limited to this adjunct, it goes by the name observer. Pervading the sense faculties and sense organs, it endows on them the ability to mediate observation limited to this adjunct, it gets the name *Mediator of Observation*. The universe gets qualified as observable because it is pervaded by the Atman; limited to this adjunct it gets the name Observable. Ponderable objects are its gross manifestations playing the role of

observables and the sense faculties and the mind are its subtle manifestations mimicking the role of the observer. The true observer however is only the Atman.

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When we do not seek to unfold our higher nature, we weaken our spiritual fibre and it suffers. It cannot die because it is immortal, but it can suffer through our carelessness. When it suffers, everything suffers within us. Others also suffer through us. When we live our life carelessly, we defeat its purpose; we shatter our faith and we lose our power to serve wisely. As illumined soul always understands the needs of others and perceives the best way to meet them. He has a sense of kinship with all living things and sympathy, forbearance and loving kindness are natural to him. He expresses these qualities spontaneously through every act and word.

– Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers,
Swami Paramananda.

MYSTERY OF CREATION - SOME VEDANTIC CONCEPTS

T.N. SETHUMADHAVAN

INTRODUCTION

One of the oldest hobbies of man is to run the search engine of his contemplative and analytical faculties to find out the final answer to the riddle of creation of the universe. This question is not merely academic but it also assumes the colours of religion, philosophy and science.

We have answers to this enigma in every religion. We have scientific theories throwing up endless and everchanging conclusions. We have philosophers' speculations and poetic imaginations. But the mystery of creaton remains as much unfathomed and unsolved today in the new millennium as in the Vedic days.

VEDIC PERSPECTIVES ON CREATION

Creation is interpreted in the Vedas as a developmental process rather than the bringing into being something not hitherto existent. The *Purusha Sukta* paints a picture of the ideal primeval being existing before any phenomenal existence. He is conceived as a cosmic person with a thousand heads, eyes and feet, who filled the whole universe and extended beyond it. The world form is only a fragment of this divine Reality.

The first principle which is called Purusha manifested as the whole world by his Tapas. This view gets crystallised into the later Upanishadic doctrine that the spirit or Atman in man-microcosm is the same as the spirit which is the cause of the world which goes by the name Brahman or Paramatman - macrocosm.

The earliest and the most remarkable account of creation is to be found in the famous *Naasadiya Sukta* of Rg Veda. Swami Vivekananda rendered this renowned hymn into English. This verse explains the universe as evolving out of the ONE ABSOLUTE REALITY which pervades and permeates the whole cosmos. But the ONE is not a god like Indra, Varuna, Prajapathi or Viswakarman. The hymn declares that all these gods are of a later origin and hence they know nothing of the beginning of things.

Hence the first principle, THAT ONE - TAD EKAM, cannot be characterised. It is without qualities or attributes, even negative ones. To apply to it any description is to limit the limitless. Yet after attempting to describe such a state presumed to be prior to creation the hymn has the humility to admit that all this is a surmise, for it is not possible to be sure of things which lie so far beyond human knowledge.

Sri Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi echoes more or less the same idea when he replies a devotee that the SRUTIS do not mean to set forth any theories of creation.

He says that they mention such theories casually so that the enquirer may please himself if he be so inclined. According to him the truth is that the world appears as a passing shadow in a flood of light. Light is necessary to see the shadow also. But the shadow does not deserve any special notice or analysis.

UPANISHADIC VIEWS ON CREATION

Vedantic masters say that knowing the truth of creation is tantamount to knowing the truth of God. All their arguments and views to unravel the truth behind creation are based on the Upanishads. Their explanation of creation is subtle which can be fathomed only by a contemplative mind.

Sometime or the other man always thinks about certain fundamental puzzles of life viz. Who am I? Wherefrom I have come? Where do I go? What is the purpose of my coming? These questions do arise because when an effect is perceived, the intellect seeks to find out its cause.

Many such questions were posed to a teacher by his students in the *Prasna Upanishad* making a direct enquiry into the phenomenon called the universe with a view to discover the ultimate cause for all the pluralistic existence.

Similar questions were answered by the master in *Aitareya Upaishad* "In the beginning verily, Atman (Self) alone was this Universe ... nothing else whatsoever was active." The emphasis is on the words nothing else. As an individual can understand the world only with reference to himself, the Rishi says that before the creation of the pluralistic world all that existed was the Self or Atman of the seeker which is nothing but the All Pervading Reality, Brahman.

This idea that the Self alone existed, implies that the Supreme did not create the world of plurality out of some material cause just as a pot-maker makes his pots out of clay which is other than the potter himself. In the programme of creation of the universee, the Supreme itself is both the raw material, which is termed as material cause as well as the bluecollar worker which is named as the efficient cause.

This is explained in the Mundakopanishad, "As a spider projects and withdraws into itself the web, as the plants sprout from the earth, as hair grows on the head and body of man, so from the Imperishable comes out the Universe." This Mantra gives us three ideas to grasp the creative process.

1. Out of the Supreme the world has come without the intervention of any cause other than Himself and in the end the projected world gets absorbed back again into the Divine.
2. The Supreme neither exerts the effort nor the purpose in the process of creation. Creation is an effortless, purposeless projection, a Divine Leela or Play, and
3. The Supreme is not a dead inert matter like a sunless void or an irreversible emptiness. It is an active, positive, conscious and vital personality, an All Pervading Essence which goes by the description Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute).

CAUSE AND EFFECT RELATIONSHIP

These ideas raise certain doubts such as what are the causes to be present for the unmanifest to become the maifest, what is the exact material with which the creator creates the world of forms and names and who is the creator?

This leads us to the nature of cause and effect relationship. To convert a cause into an effect three properties must be present.

1 The raw material - clay in the hands of a potter - is called the material cause.

2 The instrument required to give a shape to the raw material - the potter's wheel - is called instrumental cause.

3. The intelligence that converts the raw material into a finished product - since mere presence of clay and wheel cannot produce pots, an intelligent potter is required to achieve the manifestation of clay into a pot - is called the efficient cause.

In the creation of the world this intelligence-provider like today's Internet Service Provider or Chetana Shakti is called Ishwara, the creator. Thus Ishwara, is none other than the potential of creation lying dormant in the Supreme Self Brahman or Paramatman.

Adi Sankara explains "the Supreme, just out of His own free will, unrolled the Universe, which before creation remained unmanifest, like the future tree in a seed. He later on projected Himself out to be the world of endless varieties of names and forms due to the delusory play of time and space, both being the products of Maya which is also His own power."

Just as in the unmanifested state of a seed of a tree, there is no distinction of branches, leaves, flowers, fruits etc. in an unmanifested state, the world of names and forms remains in its potential format called Vasanas or impressions.

After every cycle of dissolution of the Universe, Pralaya, the world of beings, which at that time exists as Vasanas or mental impressions, manifests into a world that is suitable for them to express themselves fully just as a seed given proper weather, soil and other conditions grows into a big tree.

This process can be grasped through the means of an illustration. When a potter creates a pot out of clay, it is presumed that the clay has got the quality of 'potness'. Then only he can create a pot out of clay. Obviously, he cannot produce a pot out of sand available on the sea beach because the potness is not there in the sand. Although we say that a pot has been created, in fact there is no creation of any new thing at all. The potter has merely given a shape and a name to the already existing clay. So too, creation is nothing but a projection or manifestation of names, forms and qualities of the beings remaining dormant or in an unmaifested condition in the Supreme.

MAYA

The power of Brahman responsible for the act of projecting the world is called Maya, Avidya or Ajnana i.e. ignorance. When Brahman becomes associated with Maya, It is called Ishwara. In the common parlance, God. Brahman is all knowing – omniscient, all powerful – omnipotent and all pervading - omnipresent. He is the starting point of creation.

HIRANYAGARBHA

There is a second aspect of Brahman which is its association with the totality of Vasanas or the subtle bodies in creation, permeating them like the thread through the beads. Hence he is known as Hiranya-garbha or Sutratman, the unmanifested seed state of creation. He is also called Prana or Prajapathi, being the subtle principle of life.

DIFFERENT EXPLANATIONS

The Supreme exercises the powers of creation at his own discretion. This action is explained in different ways by different scriptures.

The Aitareya Upanishad says, "He thought I shall indeed create the worlds." Taittiriya Upanishad states, "He desired I shall become and be born. He performed Tapas. Having performed Tapas, He created all this whatsoever we perceive."

The Prasna Upanishad says, Prajapathi, having performed penance, created a pair – Rayi, matter and Prana, energy – thinking that they would together

between themselves produce creatures in many forms.

The Kathopanishad says, the whole Universe, evolved from the Brahman, moves or vibrates in the Prana meaning thereby that creation is a motion, a vibration of energy.

The Mundakopanishad says, from the Brahman are produced all these : the Creator, names and forms and nourishment for all.

The Chandogya Upanishad says, that in truth, this many seeming world is only one Reality, in which all things seem to be born, seem to live and pass away.

The Svetasvatara Upanishad uses a simile to explain the process of creation. Just as a ray of light, though colourless in itself, assumes different colours when it passes through a prism, the formless Brahman who is one without a second, who is undifferentiated – *nirvisesha,* for the reasons not known to the human mind, created diversity at all levels with the help of His own power. When the world meets its end, all these diversities merge back unto Him.

The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad gives a detailed account of how the One, Brahman became many – all the elements and the pairs of male and female.

The Maitri Upanishad tells us that the three worlds, Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah, are the very gross forms of Prajapathi.

The Paingala Upanishad mentions the famous process of quintuplication *Panchikarana* or splitting and mixing up of subtle elements in various proportions to make them gross substances out of which Prajapathi created many Brahmandas – macrocosms and many worlds appropriate to each of them – microcosms.

The *Brahma Sutras* which interpret and organize the Upanishads, regard Brahman as the material as well as the efficient cause of the universe, its origin and support, himself uncreated and eternal.

BHAGAVAD GITA'S DEPICTION

The gist of chapters 7, 9 and 15 of the Gita which deal with this topic is that all the physical elements of nature, including the material bodies of animate beings and their sensory and mental functions, may be grouped together forming the everchanging physical aspect of the universe. This is called Prakriti.

Behind the living is the soul that dwells within each being and animates it. Behind all again is the Supreme Being whose power holds together all the changes visible in one organic existence. He dwells within, supports and moves everything, but exists apart from all.

The Absolute is the universal soul or Purusha of which the whole Prakriti or nature is an outward manifestation. The universe moves according to what are known as the laws of nature. This code of nature is nothing but the manifestation of the Supreme Will. Life proceeds as if wholly independent of God.

Bhagavan says, 'Reflect on this that as the mighty air everywhere moving is yet fixed in Space, even so all beings are dependent on Me.'

THEORIES OF NON-CREATION

Gaudapada, the earliest advocate of Advaita Vedanta says that the Supreme Reality neither created this universe nor did he become the universe. According to him there is no creation and the entire world is nothing but a mental projection made by ourselves.

Yoga Vasishta, which is a dialogue between sage Vasishta and Sri Rama also tells us that there is no creation of the world. It says that this creation is a mere play of consciousness. It rises up, like the delusion of a snake in a rope when there is ignorance. It comes to an end when there is right knowledge. The world appears when the Self is not recognized; it disappears when the Self is recognized.

Just as the cloth, when investigated, is seen to be nothing but the thread, so also this world, when enquired into is seen to be merely the Self.

As the foam, the waves, the bubbles etc. are not different from the water, even so this world which has come out of the Self is not different from the Self.

Like the pot which ultimately goes back to the mud, waves into the water and ornaments into gold, so also this world which has come out of the Self finally goes back to the Self.

SANKARA'S DEFINITION

The universe, says Sankara, is a superimposition upon Brahman. Brahman remains eternally infinite and unchanged. He is not transformed into the universe as in the case of milk getting converted into curd. He simply appears as the universe to us, in our ignorance. We superimpose the apparent world upon Brahman, just as we superimpose a snake on the rope because of inadequate light.

This theory of superimposition is based on the concept of Maya by which the real image is concealed and a false one is projected. Sankara does not deny the physical existence of the world of thought and matter but says that it has got only a relative or apparent existence which is superimposed upon Brahman. He emphasizes that the Brahman alone is the absolute reality or the substratum behind the empirical universe.

According to him, Salvation consists in the merger of the individual Self with Brahman. When such right knowledge is comprehended, the superimposition vanishes and the seeker becomes one with Brahman. He attains Moksha.

CONCLUSION

It will be observed from this discussion that the riddle of the universe is the Extraordinary Open Secret which baffled man ever since he began to think deeply and which, as Rajaji puts it, must ever remain an insoluble paradox.

In the Vedas, the Upanishads and other Hindu scriptures the creation of the perceived universe is described over and over again in a bewildering variety of ways that often seem to contradict one another. This is because the human intellect being finite or limited cannot comprehend the unlimited or the infinite Brahman which has no qualities or attributes amenable for description.

But beneath all these apparent differences and contradictions, there is one fundamental principle which reveals to us that creation is a continuous process in which appearances, continuance and disintegration or otherwise understood as birth, life and death are no more than different stages in the same path moving in repeated cycles. Nothing disintegrates or dies absolutely. It merely merges in the flux of the cosmic entity to reappear or be reborn in another form.

Creation cannot, therefore, be known by the same method by which objects can be known. In that sense it cannot be known at all but can only be mentally apprehended by introspection and meditation.

Hence, with a drawn match behind us, we have to return to the pavilion where the brilliantly lit banner of Rig Veda proudly proclaims that even the Gods perhaps may not have the solution to the Eternal Cryptic Puzzle which man with his limited intellect calls THE UNIVERSE. ■

CONTRIBUTION OF ANCIENT HINDUS TO ASTRONOMY

Prof. V.S. NARASIMHAN

JYOTISHA - ITS IMPORTANCE DURING VEDIC PERIOD

The word 'Jyotisha' in the Vedic Literature connotes Astronomy and later Astrology also. It was recognised as the foremost of the six Vedangas.

Astronomical inference was necessary for the day to day life of the people, like the knowledge of the seasons for sowing, reaping etc. During the Vedic period this knowledge was all the more necessary, as Vedic sacrifices were performed at the specified times. Information regarding the times of full moon and new moon, the time of the last disappearance of the moon and its first appearance was necessary for the monthly rites called *Darsapurnamasa,* and seasonal rites like *Chaturmasya.*

Beginning from the smallest unit of time *kastha* right upto a *kalpa,* a mantra in Mahanarayana Upanishad mentions the various units. This verse mentions the division of time (*Kala*) as *muhurta,* period of day and night, half-month, month, season, year and finally a *Kalpa.* This tradition continues even to this day.

We have references to Astronomers as such who had the knowledge of the science of the sun *(Savitram)* and that of the stars *(Nakshatra Vidya). (Prajaanaya nakshtra darsam yadase ganakam)* Vaideha Janaka, Ahina (son of Asvatta), the Srauta priest Devabhaga, Gautama, Susa (son of Varsni) - are some of the astronomers mentioned).

ASTRONOMICAL DETAILS AVAILABLE IN THE VEDA. SUN, MOON, PLANETS

The Sun supports the heaven and earth (*Mitro dadhara prithvimuta dhyam*). The sun never sets at all. The sun and moon are together on *amavasya* day while five planets get mentioned in a mantra (*ami pancokshano*). Jupiter and Venus are named explicitly. The Mahabharata declares that "the luminous stars though really very large appear small and twinkle like lamps on account of their great distance" (*Durani su mahantyapi*).

NUMBER OF DAYS IN A YEAR

The R.V. (1.164.11) declares: The Wheel (of time) with twelve spokes revolves round the heavens without wearing out. O Agni; On it are 720 sons (viz. days and months). This refers to twelve months and 360 days comprising a year.

The above calculation was only a rough measure. But in Y.V. it is said with certainty that the solar year consists of 365 days and a fraction of a day. Taittiriya Samhita (7.2.6) mentions that the extra 11 days over the 12 lunar months Caitra, Vaisakha - etc., totalling 354 days in a year is meant to complete the Ritus by the performance of the Ekadas'aratra sacrifice.

Regarding the fraction in solar year (365.25) we have a brilliant piece of information in T.S. (7.1.10). It says that 5 days more were required over the Savana year of 360 days to complete the seasons, adding that 4 days are too short and 6 days too long.

INTERCALARY MONTH, ADHIMASA

When it is desired that the lunar year should accord with seasons at least approximately in the long run, it has to be wedded to the solar year suitably. The excess of a solar year over 12 lunations is termed *Shuddhi* or *Adhimasa Sesha*, literally 'correction'. When this *Shuddhi* accumulates to one lumation or 29.53 days approximately, an additional lunar month bearing the same name as the month to come is added. This process is called intercalation and the added month is called an *adhika-masa.*

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE PAKSHA AND PHASES OF THE MAN

Even an ordinary observer of the night sky will be familiar with the waxing, waning of the moon and the spectacular events of the full moon and new moon. It is therefore not surprising that this idea of a *paksa* (*sukla* and *krsna*) is clearly mentioned in the Vedas. As a matter of fact we have 24 different names for the 24 half month in a year. *Pavitram Pavisyan Puta, Medhya...* are the names mentioned in Taitt. Br.3.10.1. Further names of day-times and night times in both fortnights are given in the same section (3-10.1, 1 - 3): *Samjnanam, Vijnanam Prajnanam...* thus goes the mantra.

ECLIPSES

The most wonderful phenomenon that occurs in the sky is the eclipse, solar or lunar. The sun being eclipsed partially or totally during day-time and darkness enveloping all as if night has set in - such an occurrence could never have escaped the attention of anyone. So also the bright shining moon suddenly losing its lustre on a lunar eclipse. It is no wonder that Vedic hymns refer directly to eclipses.

It was believed that knowledge of a special kind for predicting the solar eclipse was possessed by the priests of Atri family.

The ending of the eclipse is described thus : "Atri getting back the sun who was hidden by darkness by means of the fourth Brahma incantation. Hence prayers to Atri are made for protection". It is interesting to note that an instrument named *Turiya yantra* was used to measure eclipses. Bhaskaracharya terms it as *Turiya Golam.*

Tandiya Brahmana also mentions Atri as repelling the darkness by *bhasa,* shining light. The importance of the passage lies in the fact that there is a detailed observation of the changes in the colour in the sun's disc during the progress of the eclipse, the changes being black, silver, reddish and finally white!

CONCEPT OF YUGA

The terms krta, etc., of the Veda are not used in the definite sense of time measures, as during later ages Kali is considered to contain 4,32,000 years etc.

"One who sleeps becomes *Kali;* One who sits becomes *Dvapara;* One who gets up becomes *Treta;* and who moves ahead becomes *Krta.* Therefore keep on moving, keep on moving (Art. Br.7.15.4).

CONCLUSION

The reference cited above are sufficient to establish that Vedic people had very good working knowledge of many astronomical facts. More information would come to light by proper research and unravelling of the meaning of the Vedic mantras, by dedicated scholars well-versed in Vedic Sanskrit and modern Astronomy.

There are so many works relating to our tradition. We do not read them. We know more about the books written in other countries. Which book is our authority, we do not know. Bundles upon bundles of books which have no relevance to our tradition, we know. We do not know our texts. If we become aware at least of their titles, we may begin to take some interest. If scholars who are versed in these texts volunteer to expound them, we do not lend an ear to them; we disregard them. Our country is in a very low state now. The people of other countries praise our Atma-vidya. If we should gain esteem in the world, we should augment that culture of our country which has been the object of true esteem. What is the greatness of our country? It consists in the fact that here countless sages have realised the Bliss that is the Self. If we do not come to be aware of the grounds of that greatness, we shall be demeaning ourselves...

H.H. Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati
of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam.

RELEVANCE OF VEDIC ASTRONOMY AND HINDU CHRONOLOGY TODAY

R. BRAHMACHARI AND B. BASU

Today, astronomers throughout the world, with the help of powerful telescopes, radio-telescopes and allied electronic instruments, are uncovering many mysteries of this universe and the Hubble Space Telescope, lifted into space in 1990, has added a new dimension to man's eternal quest for knowledge about the cosmos. But it is really amazing that our vedic seers, solely by their keen observations with the naked eyes and their intellect *(prajna)* could discover many astronomical secrets thousands and thousands of years ago, when the people of the other parts of the world were roaming naked in the forests and eating raw flesh.

Most importantly, Indian wisdom could originate a chronology based entirely on astronomical science while all other extent chronologies in the world are based on mundane incidents like the birth of an individual or the coronation of a king or the military success of a race over another. We should feel proud that our chronology is the oldest in the world and it can look back upto nearly 155 trillion years. It can therefore accommodate all cosmological, geological, biological events of the past having immense scientific interest.

Unfortunately most of the people of this country do not even know how rich and ancient their own culture is. On the contrary, due to Western influence, they have developed a mentality to slight whatever is Indian and to appreciate whatever is Western. They are anxiously waiting to greet the 21st century of the most unscientific Christian calendar, but do not care to know that they have already entered the 52nd century of the most scientific Hindu Chronology, Kalyabda, on 18th March this year.

The Hindu have tried to explain the origin of this creation from two distinct view points. The *arambhavada* accepts that the ultimate reality of this creation is simple and atomic in nature, while the *parinamavada* believes that this material world is the evolute of a single primordial substance which is complex, perfectly isotropic and all pervasive. Samkhya, originated by Kapila, is the most prominent of the latter school and accepts Prakriti as the ultimate entity from which this material world with its infinite diversity evolved.

The pictures sent by the Hubble Space Telescope have served a death blow to the standard Big Bang model, but they support the Samkhya view of creation of matter. ■

One of the greatest difficulties concerning our understanding of our religion is that we have very little knowledge of our scriptures. The Vedas as such are virtually unknown. Many have probably never even heard of the Vedas. Swami Ranganathananda says, knowledge shines best when it is shared with others but we have the more important task of spreading the information contained in them. The Vedas, we are told, form the foundational texts for Hindu thought and the responsibility of spreading their teachings is an extremely important one. Swami Ranganathananda says, "The entire Veda and more especially Upanishads, breathe an air of freedom of thought and action and the spirit of human dignity and worth". It is very rewarding for us to study the Vedas. While the Vedas may form the substantive basis for our rituals, myths, legends, music, the arts and culture, generally it is the Vedic Upanishads that are to provide us with the keys to unlock many of the kinds of secrets that led Charles Darwin and a host of western scientists of our time to inquire into the nature of reality.

Swami Sarvananda's exquisite introduction to his translation of Isavasyopanishad defines the Veda as the literature to shed light on the means of achieving transcendental knowledge. The role of Revealed Scripture lies beyond the spheres of perception and inference and illumines us about Absolute Truth. It is generally believed within the Hindu frame of reference that the Vedas are held to be eternal and *apaurusheya.*

The first volume of the Cultural Heritage of India published by the Ramakrishna Mission says that India's strength rests on the principles of the unity of man, the unity of thought and the unity of spiritual experience. India flourished whenever the principles of unity were well expressed. She degenerated when they were forgotten or submerged. It should be our aim to find that resurgence of strength of India's adherence to the principles of unity that have kept her alive for many millennia. Putting them into practice in our world at present should be our strengthening catalyst for a renewed hope that we have much to contribute to the making of a better world.

- Dr. Thillayvel Naidoo

SOME MORE FACETS

POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE UPANISHADIC DAYS

In those days men and women were given equal opportunities for studies. The Upanishadic period being regarded as the most creative period of Indian Culture, Literature and Science, we find glorious deeds performed by some women depicted therein.

The women in those days not only received good education, not only succeeded in their profession but also contributed to a great extent, to the cultural and educational fields of life.

We find majestic personalities of some ladies who greatly impress us by their excellent virtues, unique capability of shouldering the responsibilities and their bold attempt to spread the spiritual knowledge to the people at large.

- Dr. (Mrs.) Uma Deshpande.

DOCTRINE OF SACRIFICE

In the Vedic religion the concept of sacrifice occupies a very important place. Many times sacrifice is described to be "collection", "redemption", "journey", "procreation", and "co-operation". There are also other metaphorical descriptions of sacrifice like "garment", "water-jar", "cart", "chariot", "ship", "bird", "speech", "man", etc. All these descriptions are very significant in understanding the way in which the sacrifice works according to vedic thinkers. The descriptions of sacrifice reflect the ritualism as well as the spiritualism in the Veda.

- G.U. Thite.

TRUTH ALONE IS REAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge comes from deep devotion to higher ideals, irrevocable determination to give up lust, anger, ego etc. for attaining the higher goals of life and through service and obedience to the preceptor. Knowledge is therefore the main theme of the Vedas. "Veda" itself means knowledge. A proper study of Vedas is a must for progress along the path of knowledge. Reciting the Vedas correctly and knowing their intrinsic meaning will lead to profound religious merit and the highest spiritual efficacy. The Vedas contain both paths, that of mundane good as well as spiritual good. The latter can be achieved only by leading a life of total renunciation and self-discipline. This is because the Vedas assert that unless one withdraws oneself from the allurements of the world and turns his vision inward, one cannot attain higher knowledge. The Upanishads too say repeatedly that, of the several fields of knowledge, only that which leads to the Supreme Truth alone is real knowledge i.e. Paravidya.

The Vedic concept of education is fundamentally leading one from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge or Vidya which itself is Brahman; the science by which one knows the true imperishable Being and the seeker's senses controlled, in the process of the lasting tranquillity being experienced.

- L.N. Dubey

INDIA WHAT SHE STANDS FOR

O.M. MATHEW

The clarion call of India is an ode to discover the immortality of man. Hearken to the magnificent maxim of the Upanishad. *Amruthasya Puthraha*[1] (Ye, the children of immortal bliss). Man is not a tiny drop of dew on a shaky blade of grass, indubiously did India declare.

"How rich an estate man that lies fallow here,
If tilled, a golden crop shall surely sprout"

This couplet epitomizes the Indian ethos. Life, to the Indian, is not a tale told by an idiot signifying nothing. Rather it is a link in the chain of eternity; a note on the flute of Providence. A vision of life grand in contour and a mission of action grandiose in content, is the heritage of Hindu India.

How did this vision dawn on the Indian mind? Through thinking. By cogitation pure and simple. The Indians of the yore were bold thinkers. They were doubters too. Scepticism, these sages said, is the source of sound and salutary thought. Even the concluding stanza of the "Nasadeeya Suktham", which by any parameter is a philosophical marvel, is surcharged with scepticism. Look at its ending, as translated by Prof. Max Muller.

"He from whom this creation arose,
Whether He made it, or did not make it,
The highest seer in the highest heaven,
He foresooth knows, or does even He not know"[2].

To know, they contended, was their birthright. An ancient anthem is replete with this idea *Madannyai Jnathum arhati*[3]. (Who else than, I, shall know Thee?) Knowledge, India insisted, is the key to immortality. *Vidyamrutham asnuthe*[4]. So runs a rhyme of the Isa Upanishad.

Not the doles but the whole was what India longed for *Yovai bhooma tat sukham, nalpe sukhamasthi*[5], the Chandogya Upanishad categorically contends. Seldom did India sue for favours with suppliant knees.

Long before Descartes, the French mathematician cum philosopher, enunciated the dictum, "Cogito Ergo Sum", (I think, therefore I exist) the Indian rishi had realised that thought is existence and existence sans thought is extinction. India thought, and so she survived. She lived

with obdurate faith and steadfast hope, as a result of transcendental thinking.

Not by fleeing from life, but by the detached living of life only, does man develop personality. No hasty rush to hermitages or caves. Man, forget not in your haste that you have obligations to fulfil, as a student and householder. Life must be lived, before it is surpassed. The world and its values are not to be despised or disparaged. They are truths, inviolable and immutable indeed in the physical plane. Therefore, be in the world; but be not of the world and then behold the world as a whole. Here lies India's emphasis on ethics. Not the sensually soothing, but the ennobling and the elevating should be sought after. The 'Sreyas' and not the 'Preyas', in the phraseology of the Katha Upanishad.[6]

The thoughtful soul of India, to solitude retired, not merely after the day's toil, but after all the social callings were discharged. There, far from the maddening cacophony of the madding crowds and the ignoble strifes of the masses, in constant communion with Nature and caressed by Her, the cognitive and cogitative Indian mind reflected on life in its entirely. The finale is the apotheosis of man, the apparent mortal.

Yea, the mighty master that leads the vast sublime symphony of the starry heavens and the tiny master monitoring the inner springs of man through moral imperatives, are equated. *Tat Twam Asi* ('That Thou Art'), thunders and Chandogya Upanishad, nine times[7]. This is one of the four 'Mahavakyas' or great dicta of the Vedantic philosophy.[8] In the words of Prof. Paul Deussen, the illustrious Vedantic scholar of Germany, "the great formula *Tat Twam Asi* gives in three words, metaphysics and morals, all together."[9]

The Mundaka Upanishad brings out the identity of God and Man in a beautiful imagery, which runs as under :

"Like two birds of golden plumage, companions inseparable
Perched on the boughs of the self-same tree
Are the two beings, one feasts on the fruits of the tree
While the other, eating not, does simply gaze "[10]

Thus live, the little self and the Great Self, within every human being.

What a bold vision! This wonderful discovery, it is said, set Immanuel Kant of Germany, thinking. This persistent thought ultimately prompted him to publish his 'Critiques'.

Ere long, the philosophers of India discovered the principle of utter simplicity ubiquitous in Nature. These wise men christened it the "Silence Divine". Centuries

had to elapse before the Jewish Rabbi Hillel exhorted his disciples, `Know Him in silence.'

India rocked the philosophical world with another revolution. What is in the macrocosm, is in the microcosom also and vice-versa India indicated. To use an anachronism, the Indians were monists much before Baruch Spinoza. Everything in this Universe is subject to the same inexorable 'Rta' or cosmic order and is governed by the infallible law of `Karma', with its concomitant process called metempsychois or transmigration. Prejudices apart, this theory provides a plausible explanation to the woes and weals of man and his tribe. In parenthesis it may be noted, that Pythagoras the Greek mathematician,[11] the Jewish rabbis like Maimonides and the Christian theologian Oriegn,[12] had no qualms in accepting this doctrine, even braving the risk of rustication. Disquieting, it may be to some, to know that, Jesus also gave sufferance to this theory.[13]

The understanding of the unity of existence, lineates the legacy of India. This certainly, is the quintessence of the Vedanta. The Upanishads unequivocally utter *Sarvam khalu idam Brahma*[14], *Isa vasyam idam sarvam*[15], *Poornamada Poornamidam*[16], *Purusha evedam viswam*[17], (All this is Brahman; All here is donned by divinity; That is whole, so is this; The Lord permeates the Universe). Her finding `Satyam, Sivam, Sundaram' (Truth, Order and Beauty) as crystallised in Vedantic thought is a prime mover towards affirmative philosophy and optimistic thought. Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, eulogised the Upanishads in the following words, "In the whole world there is no study so beneficial and so elevating as that of the Upanishads. It has been the solace of my life, it will be the solace of my death."[18]

Even while scaling the dizzy heights of metaphysics, or even while "they climbed up to the heights where their lungs only could breath" as Max Muller opines,[19] these preceptors never became oblivious of the physical world and its relative place in human life. So, without conceding to be worldly, they acceded to analyse the world and its ways.

It is an irrefutable fact of history, that centuries before the birth of Christ, nay, long before the advent of Moses, the first prophet of Israel, when the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxon races were living in forests, on raw meat, wearing animal hides and tattooing their bodies, yea, in that remote antiquity, the dawn of civilization had broken upon the horizon of India. Reassured by the results of research and buttressed by the verdicts of history, Max Muller, in a moment of rhapsody, remarked, "If one would ask me, under

what sky the human mind has most fully developed in its precious gifts, has scrutinised most profoundly the greatest problems of life, and has, at least for some, provided solutions, which deserve to be admired even by those who have studied Plato and Kant, I would indicate India"[20]. Incensed by an intense longing for knowledge and guided by an unswering love for the Truth, the dons of India discovered many a natural law and explained it without fear of persecution or ostracism.

India's ethos is not materialistic like that of modern Europe. Nor is it intellectual as that of the ancient Athens. Essentially and eminently it is spiritual. The superiority of the spirit over matter and the mind has been the basis and the blossom, the foundation and the fruition, of Indian thought. But mark! while the spirit is described *Satyasya Satyam*[21], other entities also are designated "Satyam". Inebriated by the spirit, no Indian ever exclaimed even wittingly 'no matter, never mind'.

The social system of India is built upon this idea of spirituality and Dharma. Her concept of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* (the world as one family) eloquently upholds it. Her philosophy of life, propped up by the principles of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha, collectively called the *Chaturvidha Purushartha*, (the four ideals of man) formulates it. It may be said that this philosophy is a buckle that binds, a hyphen that joins the terrestial and the celestial. Earth and heaven are linked in this grand design. India's polity with Dharma as the loadstone is an appendix to spirituality. Her religion is an eternal spring for the surging of the spiritual consciousness in man. Indian art and literature have the same motif.

Indian jurisprudence is mellowed by the milk of spirituality. It unequivocally vouches that whatever rights inhere in man, exist in woman too. The code of Manu is more candid on this. He decreed that a woman's body is so sacred that it should not be struck even with a feather or flower. How enlivening is the Hindu concept of marriage. It is a union of blood with blood and flesh with flesh, not in the physical aspect, but in the spiritual sense and so, it is irrevocable. For a Hindu husband, a wife is his bosom friend, a companion in solitude, a father in advice, a mother in all seasons of distress, and an oasis in life's wilderness. Her concept of 'Ardhanareeswara' is the antidote to the havoc wrought out by the myth of the creation of Eve, the first woman, from the ribs of Adam, the first man. No story of man's first disobedience and fall, due to his fascination for the female, was ever spun by India, for the shame of derogation. The underlying philosophy of the Tantric system is an eloquent exposition of the representation of the divinity as woman.

The vision that the spirit, or noumena, to borrow a phrase from Immanuel Kant, pervades everywhere, led the Indian mind to sublimate everything. No anathema, no condemnation, no damnation. This world with all its apparent trials, tribulations, and even transitoriness is suspended on or supported in the Eternal. The Absolute is not only transcendental, but immanent too. The greatest blasphemy, India decreed, is to brand thyself or thy brother a sinner. In the Indian liturgy, there is no concept of sin and its sequel the contrite heart. Instead there is only error, which can be corrected by a little effort of human will.

Pessimism has no permanent place in the make up of the Indian mind. True, pessimism did spread its tentacles to stifle the soul of India in her infancy; but without avail. Soon did Vedanta with its roarings on the divinity of man, and with its infallible logic rescued and redeemed the Indian mind from the pitfalls of pessimism and put it back on the path of pristine purity. Even the Buddha who started his life as if bitten by the bug of pessimism, eventually lands in the sure and secure shores of optimism. Fasten our thoughts on Gotama's four noble truths. They summarise what India stands for and stood by, for the transfiguration of man. "There is misery; there is a cause for it; misery can be ended; there is a way to it". These can hardly be called a depressing or demoralising, negative or pessimistic theory of existence.

Negation of life has never been the ideal of India. *Jijiviset Satam Samah*[22] (one should wish to live a hundred years), instructs the Isa Upanishad. The Bhagavad Gita, the `Song Celestial', taking the thread from the thinkers of the Upanishads, conceived of and brought out the *Sthitaprajna* as the ideal of man. Not the hesitation of Hamlet, but the alacrity of Othello, is what Hindu India has upheld always. No more lotus eating; stop star gazing; "give up unmanliness"[23] the Gita admonishes. Incessant action, with devotion but without the anxiety of earning the fruits thereof, is extolled and exemplified.[24] A still joy of self conquest, a serene joy of inner peace, and a sublime joy of the Supreme Self fills the heart of one who shares the spirit of the `Song Celestial'. These teachings along with the other wise sayings of the Gita, the cream of the Upanishads and the homilies of the Mahabharata, the encyclopaedia of life, will ever be the signposts for man in his odyssey here and excursion hereafter.

Happiness, the prime pursuit of man, the sages said, lies, not in material wealth or physical welfare. True, they have their relative values and hence are to be acquired as contributory factors. Penury and privation will scuttle or strangulate man's endeavours to attain godhead. *Bhubhikshu kim na karothi papam*? (which heinous crime shall not the man in the pangs of hunger perpetrate?). So is a

good physique, an essential condition for spiritual success. *Sareeram adyam khalu dharmasadhanam*[25]. Corporal mortification the seers of the yore asserted, stems from cold cruel perversity.

Yet, the Indian mind did not rest content after pronouncing these judgements. Their incisiveness drove them on to detect the fountainhead of happiness. To their utter dismay and disappointment they realized that words and the mind recoil, baffled in their quest for reality in the phenomenal world. *Na tatra chaksuhr gacchati, na vak gacchati na manah* (the eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind), admits the acharya or the seer of the Kena Upanishad.[26] But they were made of sterner stuff, than this world has dreamt of. Daringly, they dived deep into the very substratum of their own being. Sooner than later, these "Pilgrim Fathers" hit at the very core, the Atman or Self. *Vedaham etam Purusham Mahantam*[27] (I have known the Great One,) they revealed resolutely. Look inward, *(Aavrutha Chakshu)*[28] and see the Self, they directed. `The kingdom of God is within you'[29] as the Nazerene preached later during His public ministry.

This Self, is the perennial source of perpetual felicity, they discovered. This is no mere reverie, no conjecture. It is experience emanating from the immediate and direct perception of the Truth. This is what true religion is. Religion is realisation, India reiterates.

What the great Sri Sankaracharya calls *Aparokshanubhoodi* is the very same thing.

Here is an anecdote, from the annals of Archimedes, the scientist of Syracuse. In the euphoria, after the invention of the principle of the lever, he boasted, "Show me a fulcrum, and I shall lift the earth". But poor Archimedes! He had to moan and groan for want of a fulcrum. The Indian sage quipped. "Man, the fulcrum is the Self in you; fear it not; catch hold of it. Like the rod of Moses, which was but a serpent till he courageously caught hold of it, it will lead you on to the promised plane of `Existence-Knowledge-Bliss.'

Not the savant or the scholar, but the simple and the selfless, is the really religious. Not rhetoric, but renunciation, that is the stamp of religion. Renunciation not of wealth or the wherewithals, but of the ego, i.e., the sense of ownership and the sense of enjoyership. The obliteration of the `I' consciousness. This remarkable philosophy has been eloquently expressed in two lines of melodious poetry, by the great Swami Rama Tirtha, the mathematician turned monk, who astounded the American audience by the tirade of his Vedantic talks and who met

with a watery grave at the tender age of thirtytwo.

"When shall I be free?

When 'I' shall cease to be"

Sages and saints of India, from the hoary past to Sri Ramakrishna, the God-intoxicated man of modern times, testify that the Truth is not monofaceted. A word about Sri Ramakrishna, the solitary soul who stirred the soul of India from her stupefying slumber. During the short lifespan of fifty years he achieved what the Indian mind had attained in fifty centuries. In the words of Romain Rolland, Ramakrishna was "the fruit of a new autumn, a new message of the soul, the symphony of India".[30] The seer of the Rig Veda, had sung in the dim past, that verily the Truth has multitudinous manifestations. *Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti*[31] (The Truth is one; the knowers call it by different names). As heirs to this heritage, the Jains propagated the doctrine of *Anekantavada* and its sequel the *Syad Vada* meaning `may be'. What a modesty! After all, dogmatism is the hobgoblin of mean minds and base metals. Cocksureness is mortal's chiefest enemy. The truth is that many are the ways to the Truth, sheepishly but sternly did India suggest. Hence no assent is accorded by India for jihads and genocides.

This broad attitude brought in its train, the spirit of toleration, accommodation, and acceptance. Never has India been guilty of the iniquities of inquisition, pogroms, or burning at the stakes. Therefore, this country has a clean conscience to her credit. The nightmare of nemesis haunts her not. No need for the perfumes of Arabia to cleanse her hands. As water was turned into wine at the very look of Jesus the Christ, or as everything was transformed into gold at the mere touch of Midas, so has India's spiritual song transformed everything, not to wine, not to gold, but to God.

Therefore, let us offer salutations to Mother India.

Namasthe Sada Vatsale Mathru-bhoome. Thou art an enigma or a will-o-the-wisp to the inhospitable and the indolent. But to the straightforward and sympathetic, thou, like a loving mother, bestow the bounty of understanding. We must have the firm conviction that this is the land of the gods in the mould of mortals. This is no fantasy or figment of fancy. Recall, what is implied in the `Bible of Humanity', authored by the French philosopher Michlet. Let us sing with him in chorus, "Athens and Greece failed to quench my thirst. The springs of Syria are all dried up. I turned to the land of the Himalayas. It appeared to me as the abode of the celestials". Like him we also shall swallow the nectar or sip the elixir of life from the gushes of the Ganges. Share the

spirit of Prof. Romain Rolland, "If there is one place on the plane of earth where all the dreams of living man have found a home from the very earliest days, when man began the dream of existence, it is India".[32]

Hence *Uthishtata, Jagratha, Prapya varan nibodhata*[33] (Arise, awake and proceed to the presence of a preceptor, to be instructed). Hear his words intently, evaluate them and meditate on their spiritual significance (*Sravana, Manana* and *Nididhyasana*). Thus shall we be all well versed in the Wisdom that is India.

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THE VEDIC CONCEPT OF THE SOCIETY, LAW AND PEOPLE; AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Dr. A.B. SAI PRASAD

Bharatvarsha, the land of introspection, spirituality and wisdom is more ancient than any known or to be known ancient theory of habitation. As it is beyond the horizon of ancientness its age goes back to the end point of infinity. Like Brahman who is name less and formless, even the religion, race and civilization of this holy land of Bharat are nameless. Commenting on this particular nameless factor of religion, culture, society and people, His Holiness of Kanchi Kamakotipeetam Sri Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamiji has said, "We give a name to a thing when there are more than one of the same kind and to distinguish one from the other or others. If there is only one thing there is no need to give it a name. The same is the case with our religion". (*Aspects of Our Religion,* p.5). Sharing similar views with Sri Swamiji, the Vivekananda of RSS movement Sri Guruji Golwalkar has said emphatically, "We existed when there was no necessity for any name. We were the good, the enlightened people, we were the people who knew about the laws of nature and the laws of the spirit." In the same breath he has said, we had brought into life almost every thing that was beneficial into life, almost every thing that was beneficial to mankind. (*Bunch of Thoughts,* p.47). We were an awakened people when the rest of the world was filled with bipeds and quadrupeds. Praising the greatness of our civilization and culture the spiritual Lion of India, Swami Vivekananda in his inimitable way has said : "Here activity prevailed when even Greece did not exist, when Rome was not thought of, when the very fathers of the modern Europeans lived in the forest and painted themselves blue (*Lectures from Colombo to Almora,* p. 4 - 5). Secularism and catholicity being the cardinal principles of our society we continue to live and continue to guide

humanity. The following vedic prayer holds parallel mirrors to our spiritual superiority. *That is, let every one be happy, let every one be free from al ills.* (Tr. By Sri Guruji). (सर्वेपि सुखिनः संतु सर्वे संतु निरामयाः)

As it was in vedic period even now we cannot dissociate religion from society. Our society was built on `we' factor and not on `I' factor. `In our society the God is not referred as `He' but as `It' only. We never wanted God to be understood as a man. Our great sages felt that `He' would make an invidious distinction, as if God were a man. So, 'It' the impersonal, is used (*Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, p. 32). In the beginning according to our philosophy we had a society of highest order.

न राज्यं न च राजाऽऽसीत् न दण्डयो न च दाण्डिकः ।
धर्मेणैव प्रजास्सर्वा रक्षन्ति स्म परस्परम् ।

That *is, there was no state, no ruler, no penalty, and criminals were also not there. Everybody was protected by Dharma* (Tr. By Sri Guruji).

Slowly people started organizing themselves. They started moving in groups and these groups were then called as *Ganas*. Each *Gana* had a leader. The leader was known by the word 'Rajan'. He was assisted by an Army commander who was known by the name Senapathi and a 'Purohit' who is to guide the king (V.N. Hari Rao, *History of India*, p.17).

Thus the society which was entirely Brahminical in concept got itself divided into classes. These classes were misinterpreted as caste by the British Historians. According to Swami Vivekananda, in the Satya Yuga there was only one caste and that was Brahmin. Swamiji further says, "We read in the Mahabharata that the whole world was in the beginning peopled with Brahmins and that as they began to degenerate they became divided into different Castes and that when the cycle turns round, they will all go back to the Brahminical Origin (*Lectures from Colombo to Almora,* p. 110). For the smooth functioning of the society only the entire society was divided into four classes.

ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहू राजन्यः कृतः ।
ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्याँशूद्रो अजायत ॥

This particular one speaks volumes about division of labour. In discharging their duties all were equally important. If we have a thorn in our flesh its pain is felt by the entire body. This classification continues to this day. Today they are called as Intelligentsia, Defence Personnel, Business Community and Working Class. The last mentioned one was not a derogatory term. Commenting on the four Varnas, Sri Paramacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam says, "If it (caste system) were really injurious to the society our ancestors would have abolished it long

ago" (*Aspects of Religion* p. 48). Explaining the purpose of caste and religion he further says : caste and religion are meant to keep society together so that all the component parts would strive for general welfare of the community as a whole in an atmosphere of co-operation and not to create hatred and conflicts (Ibid). We have to clearly understand that no one becomes a Brahmin by birth. Only by good deeds one becomes a Brahmin. The division is based on Guna Karma Swabhava and not on any thing else.

Wisdom and universal brotherhood are the two unique and ethnic qualities of our society. Yet it did not arrogate to itself ethnocentricity. The Rig Vedic prayer says :

आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः

i.e. let the noble thoughts come to us from every side. It considered the entire world as its home.

In the *Annapoorna Sthotram* even to this day we recite :

माता च पार्वती देवी पिता देवो महेश्वरः ।
बांधवा शिव भक्ताश्च स्वदेशो भुवनत्रयम् ।।

Touching on the वसुधैव कुटुंबकम् aspect of Hindu society, Manu, the law giver has this to day.

एतद् देश प्रसूतस्य सकाशादंअग्रजन्मनः
स्वं स्वं चरित्रम् शिक्षेरन् प्रथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः

This sermon on behavioural pattern had, it seems, a telling effect on the great Arnold Toynbee. In his treatise a *Study of History* he has recorded his feelings like this : "Indian religions are not exclusive minded. They are ready to allow that there may be alternative approaches to the mystery. I feel sure that in this they are right and that this catholic minded Indian Religious spirit is the way of salvation for all religions in an age as a single family if we are not to destroy ourselves" (Vol. X p. 238).

The *Sarva Manavah* (सर्वमानवाः) appeal of Manu has become the integral part of UNO. The preamble of the charter which was signed at San Francisco on the 26th day of June 1945 reads : We the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which twice in our life time has brought untold sorrow to mankind and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights - have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims (*The Occasional Speeches and Writings of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan* p.2). Swami Chinmayananda summarises the essence of Hindu Dharma in his chosen words like this: Hinduism is a science of perfection. There is in Hinduism a vitality which we can reach and share. There is an answer to every problem individual, social, national or international in our sacred books (*Our Culture at a Glance*, p. 29).

Dr. Julian Huxley, the Director General of UNESCO once solicited the views of Mahatma Gandhi on the problem of drawing up a list of fundamental human rights which could be accepted by all states as transcending ideological differences, keeping the following view of Kautilya in his mind :

प्रजा सुखे सुखं राज्ञः प्रजानां च हिते हितम् ।
नात्म प्रियं हितं राज्ञः प्रजानां तु प्रियं हितम् ॥

(*In the happiness of his subjects lies the happiness, in their welfare his welfare, whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good.* (Tr. By Sri S.S. Dhawan). Gandhiji wrote back to Julian Huxley, "I learnt from my illiterate but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done. Thus the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. From this one fundamental statement perhaps it is easy enough to define duties of man and woman and correlate every right to some corresponding duty to be first performed. Every other right can be drawn to be a usurpation hardly worth fighting for (From S.S. Dhawan's article on *Secularism*, p. 118). The ancient Indian society and the ancient Indian jurisprudence have thus successfully guided modern world organisations like the UN and the UNESCO.

As the Vedas were guiding the society it never really felt the need for a king. In the *Shanthi Parva* of the *Mahabharata,* Yudhishtira raises this pertinent question with Bhishma. The embodiment of wisdom, Bhishma answers the question thus, "The king must be a person who believes and propagates secular ideas." The rulers who followed Dharmaraja, Parikshit, and Janamejaya ruled over Kuru country between Ganga and Jamuna. There was another great ruler by name Janaka who ruled over Videha. By the 6th century B.C. according to Buddhist Pali sources, we had 16 kingdoms.

Among the kingdoms, Avanthi, Kosala, Magadha were the most important Mahajanapadas. The law givers of our country Manu, Yagnavalkya, Brihaspathi, Kautilya etc. had laid down rules for good governance.

During the time of the Mauryas, according to the historian Dr. V.N. Hari Rao, "The king was not a law maker. He was subject to and was the guardian of the eternal law of the land i.e. Sanathana Dharma (*History of India,* Part I, p. 40). *Sadachara* occupies an important place in our Sanathana Dharma.

In the *Narada Smriti,* we find this couplet which throws light on judicial impartiality :

तस्माद् धर्मासनं प्राप्य राजा विगत मत्सरः
समं स्याद् सर्व भूतेषु बिभ्रद्वैवस्तं व्रतम्

(i.e. when the king is sitting on the judge's seat, he is required to be absolutely impartial towards all beings and thus observe his vow of Vivaswath meaning oath of impartiality. (Tr. by Sri S.S. Dhawan). We in Tamil Nadu are proud of one such king who was known as Manu Neethi Cholan. The wizard of Hindi short stories, Munshi Premchand, through his ever green story *Panch Parameswar* proves this point.

Along with *Sadachara,* according to Sri P.B. Gajendra Gadkar, former Chief Justice of India, the other sources of law were whatever is healthy for oneself and whatever is the result of healthy desire. (*Essay on Secularism* p.2). He quotes the Privy Council's observation in the case of Collector of Madura Vs. Mootoo Rama Linga (1868). The council advised the judges administering Hindu Law in India to remember that 'under the Hindu system of law clear proof of usage' will outweigh the written text of Law (*Ibid* p.2). The Paramacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti-peetam, while quoting scriptures says: In case of doubt when there is no other approved means to solve it, the good people rely on the voice of conscience.

स तां हि संदेह पदेषु वस्तुषु
प्रमाण मंतः करण प्रवृत्तयः ।

(*Aspects of our Religion* p.20).

Sadachara or righteousness is the integral part of our Dharma. In the *Karna Parva* of the Mahabharata this Dharma has been defined like this :

धारणाध्दर्ममित्याहु धर्मो धारयते प्रजाः
तस्माध्दारण सयुक्त सधर्म इति सं स्मृतः

i.e. *They call it Dharma because it is a force which supports or holds together* - because it holds the people or society together (Tr. by Sri S.S. Dhawan) According to Sri P.B. Gajendra Gadkar, the Hindu code now speaks the same language and the Hindu community has now accepted the position that matters of law included in the Hindu code or secular matters with which religion is not concerned (*Essay on Secularism,* p.3). Hope this will reach the ears of our constitutional experts as well as experts of law when they review our constitution.

In the Vedic times the society was conceived as a Purusha. Modern sociologist like Caul too has described human society as a living body (*Pavamani* p.15). Even in the bygone days a collective group only ruled this land of Bharat. We used to have, according to the historian, V.N. Hari Rao Mantripanishad, even today we have only Mantripanishad. When we have rejected Monarchical system Australians have recently voted for the monarchical system : In those days, as we

have today, there was patriarchal system. Father was the head of the family. About family system the Atharvana Veda has given this :

अनुव्रतः पितुः पुत्रो माता भवतु संमनाः
जाया पत्ये मधुमतीं वाचं वदतु शान्तिवाम्
३-३०-२

i.e. *Let the son follow the orders of his father. Let the mother be a pious woman. Let the wife be a person blessed with sweet tongue.* Woman had a pride of place in the society. Manu has said : "Where women are honoured there the gods are pleased. Where they are not honoured all work becomes fruitless (*Manusmriti* 3.56). The *Mahanirwana Tantra* says : A girl also should be brought up and educated with great effort (VII-47). Speaking on the institution of marriage, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan has said once, "The institution of marriage was exalted in the Indian tradition. Women were free to choose their husbands." He quotes an interesting passage from *Saptha Sati Durga* who as a Kumari tells the Asuras who aspired to marry her. He who conquers me in battle, he who humbles my pride, he who is my equal in this world, he shall be my husband (*Occasional Speeches and Writings*, p. 527).

In those days married couples used to take apart from नातिचरामि vow the following vow : Let this heart of yours be mine and let this heart of mine be yours (*The Mahabharata* 1, 3, 9). Like in western countries the Indian husband even to this day never says : Well I am your husband and you be my woman.

About the place of mother in the ancient Indian society Manu says : One Acharya excels a hundred Upadhyayas in glory; a father excels a hundred Acharyas in glory but a mother excels even a thousand fathers in glory (*Occasional Speeches and Writings*, p. 527).

Tulsi Das, the medieval India's harbinger of hope glorifies the place of woman, particularly mother, in the following lines of Ayodhya Kanda.

जौं केवल पितु आयसुताता । तौ जनि जाहुजानि बडि माता ॥
जौं पितु मातु कहेउ बन जाना । तौ कानन सत अवध समाना ॥

If the marching orders are given by your father, Rama, you need not go to forest, because mother is superior to father. If both have given the orders then for you the forest will be like hundred Ayodhyas.

Tolerance and sacrifice are the very oxygen of our society. The very first verse of Upanishad opens like this :

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वम् यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः मा गृधः कस्यस्विद् धनम् ॥

i.e. *God permeates all creation. Whatever is left over by him, after offering him enjoy only that much. Do not rob what belongs to others* (Tr. by Guruji Golwalkar).

Manu too prescribes a similar code.

यावत् भ्रियेत जठरं तावत् स्वत्वं हि देहिनाम् ।
अधिकं योऽभिमन्येत स स्तेनं दण्डमर्हति ॥

i.e. Take whatever is essential for bodily sustenance. To take more is an act of theft and deserves to be punished (Tr. By Guruji Golwalkar). Even modern Messiahs of Communism and Egalitarianism like Marx, Engels, Hegal, etc., will envy us because we are the forefathers of the theories like 'to each according to his needs' and 'workers of the world get united'.

We have been condemning the 'preaching of thoughts with fire and sword' (Swami Vivekananda). We have been accepting the new ideas of the west under the usage.

एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्ति

That which exists is one sages call by various names. This particular statement speaks volumes about our tolerance. Mr. A.R. Blackshield belonging to the Faculty of Law, University of Sydney says : The tradition of tolerance is fundamental to Hinduism. It is not merely that Hinduism does not recognize hearsay that a Hindu born remains a Hindu whatever he believes but that Hindu Society as a whole has historically displayed tolerance towards religious minorities. "He explains his point by giving an example. He continues : It is no accident that a community of sunworshipping Parsees, originally from Persia, with strange - and to most Hindus probably repugnant - ways of disposing their dead, should have been permitted in peace to establish themselves as a prosperous community in India... Tolerance is of the very material from which the Indian character is formed. (*Secularism and Social Control,* p.71). Recently the world has witnessed a phenomenon on TV in Kargil sector. Our Jawans were performing the funeral rights for those Pakistani soldiers whose bodies the Pakistani Army Officials refused to receive. At that time there were less number of Muslims. The Hindus outnumbered Muslims. At one stage all Hindu soldiers sat on the ground with their hands raised and said "Alla Ho Akbar". Such is the tolerance in our blood.

The world, as everybody knows, has undergone so many changes. Yet the Indian retains his qualities of spirituality, wisdom and tolerance. Speaking on this point, Swami Vivekananda has said... "and if Manu comes back he would not be bewildered and would not find himself in a foreign land. The same laws are here, laws

adjusted and thought out through thousands and thousands of years; customs, the outcome of the acumen of ages and the experience of the centuries that seem to be normal and as the days go by blow after blow of misfortune has been delivered upon them, such blows seem to have served one purpose only that of making them stronger and more constant". (*Lectures from Colombo to Almora)*

Lord Adrian has once said at Oxford : "We have come to a time when by pressing a button it will be possible for us to obliterate two-thirds of the world, and if we understand the nature of human behaviour we may be able to avert the catastrophe". Now the billion dollar question is how to understand the nature of human behaviour and how to avert the catastrophe. Fortunately, for humanity we have an answer for this in our Rig Veda. Let us understand and follow the spirit of co-operation that the following hymns tell us.

संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम्
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते । (१०-१९१-२)
समानी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः
समान मस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति (१०-१९१-४)

Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthi hı. ■

There is a power which excels worldly wisdom. Yet the world of higher aspirations is not separate from this world. It can be found here and now; we fail to sense it because we do not open the right avenues. There is not a single person who has found happiness, peace or lasting contentment in the finite world; but after they have found it within, they can carry it to the outside. As soon as we find a larger happiness, we cease to cling to the lesser one.

– Book of Daily Thoughts and Prayers,

Swami Paramananda.

AGNIHOTRA FOR PURIFICATION OF ATMOSPHERE AND HARMONIOUS LIFE

Col. M. DESHPANDE

GUIDED MISSILES AND MISGUIDED MEN

The Institute for Studies in Vedic Sciences, Shivpuri, Akkalkot is engaged in spreading the knowledge of the Vedas and thus serving the cause of humanity and nature. In this context we consider this opportunity to awaken you to the realities of the present times. It is the call of the hour. We believe it our duty to sound you to the alert that has been proclaimed throughout the world. The alert concerns the hopelessly degrading condition of our environment. Our planet is in a serious state of emergency due to alarming levels of pollution everywhere. Mother Nature and human have been gravely affected by this and, therefore, a panicky situation confronts us. The atmosphere needs immediate healing to correct the balance of Nature. In this regard, first we would like to bring to your notice the problems we face and then introduce a time-tested sure remedy, the Vedic antidote, that is available to us in our heritage.

For a long time now, in his pursuit of progress, man has mercilessly exploited Nature without bothering for maintaining the ecological balance necessary for a healthy and clean living. Resultantly, pollution of all kinds has poisoned Nature. Ozone depletion and greenhouse effect pose a serious threat to the atmosphere. Forests are dying. Many eco-friendly species of plants and animals are becoming extinct from the surface of the earth. The seasonal cycles and weather patterns have undergone change and lands are no more friendly. Agricultural lands have turned into dust bowls. Production of food-grains is not achieving the desired target in spite of heavy doses of chemical fertilizers.

In fact, these chemical fertilizers have caused widespread damage to the fertility of the land substantially and degraded the quality of food-grains. As a consequence malnutrition and starvation have become an alarming problem.

Human health, both mental and physical, is at stake–Cancer is on the rise. The AIDS phenomenon is hair-raising. It is rapidly emerging as a prime killer. Hypertension, cardiac disorder, depression and psychiatric problems are now common diseases. Overcome by depression and

frustration, the younger generation is turning towards alcoholism and drug abuse. This certainly is a grave threat to the society. These conditions have caused the investigating Scientists to declare that stress-related health hazards are on the rise everywhere.

The so-called modern day life is engaged in a race to nowhere. Speed has overtaken sensibility. Disharmony exists at home and at work place. Consequently families are breaking. Co-operation is being replaced by pressure. Human values have become things of the past and are laughed at; violence and crime have taken the center stage in today's life. As if this was not enough, now the menacing clouds of a possible nuclear war are hovering over the world. Insecurity, anxiety and tension is the state in which we are living today. This certainly is scary and disastrous.

The message, the guiding principles, the wisdom preached by Prophets and Saints has been given a go-bye in the present times. The result is agony and nothing but agony. In this context it is aptly said, we are living in a world where we have guided missiles but misguided men. Man is misguided because he has forgotten the age-old ancient principles for sound living.

WHAT IS THE WAY OUT?

Is there a way out of all this mess? Yes, there is, and this is the reason why we are making this approach. We wish to share with you an ancient message which, over the period of time, had got lost. Now it is being revived by the Divine Will as an effective solution to the present day global problems. This message, when put to practice, has all the potential to set things right for you. In fact this was the secret of the healthy and happy living of our forefathers. This time-tested remedy has the ability and power to bring peace, prosperity, happiness and sound health to you and your beloved family. Be assured that it will free you from tension, stress and shower mental peace that has been alluding for you long. Once you give place to this practice in your daily routine a new vista will be opened for you to live a happy, stress-free life in pollution-free atmosphere. This message, which is available to us through our heritage, has answers for all problems.

This ancient knowledge is known as VEDAS. The word Veda originates from the Sanskrit verbal root VID which means TO KNOW. Veda means pure knowledge. This was handed down to man in Sanskrit language, which is the mother of all languages. This knowledge was given to man right at the time of Creation. This is why VEDA is not the monopoly of any particular community or country. It is universal. It is for all humanity irrespective of colour, language, and country.

The Vedas are the storehouse of knowledge - vast, unfathomable. It being so, then how is it possible for us simple mortals to know what is its Message?

Mercifully, the great Seer and Perfect Master Paramasadguru Shree Gajanan Maharaj of Shivpuri, Akkalkot coming to our help has expounded the teachings of the Vedas in the simplest manner. Giving us the essence, the extract of the Vedas Shree has ordained to follow a convenient and easy fivefold path. This fivefold path is Yagnya, Daan, Tapa, Karma and Swadhyaya. The five most practicable principles of this path are as follows :

1. **Yagnya (Agnihotra) :**
   To be performed for purification of the atmosphere.

2. **Daan (Sharing) :**
   Share your assets for development of non-attachment.

3. **Tapa (Penance) :**
   To be practised as self-imposed discipline over body, mind and speech which will ultimately unleash potent power of the mind.

4. **Karma (Do's and Dont's) :**
   Right actions to be performed without attachment. "Reap as you Sow is the law of Karma." Its purpose is self-purification.

5. **Swadhyaya (Self-study) :**
   Swa-Adhyaya is the study of Self. Like "Who am I? What am I here for?" The ultimate knowledge of life.

The copper metal is known to possess tremendous healing properties. It has oligodynamic property meaning it has an antibacterial action. This is the reason copper is widely used for storing drinking water. It purifies and enhances the energy level of water. The metal copper plays an important role in the process of Agnihotra as it has close connection with fire, heat, electro-magnetic forces and cosmic energy fields.

The shape of this pot is semi-pyramid. You all know that the pyramids of Egypt are one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Pyramid shape is unique in itself. It generates and decentralises special healing and purifying energies and forces. The word `Pyramid' has come from the Greek word `Pyr' which means Fire and `amid' means `amidst'. Thus pyramid means `fire in the middle'. The ancient word for pyramid in Egyptian language was `khuti' or `khufu', which also means `glorious light'. The pyramid shape is widely experienced to generate any special energy field which possesses bacteriostatic properties.

Fire for Agnihotra is to be prepared using dried cowdung cakes. Cow means

the cow family. Thus the dried dung of calves of bulls may also be used. Please note that in any event the dung of the buffalo or any other animals is strictly prohibited for use in Agnihotra performance.

You may ask `why only cowdung?' The reason being cowdung is known to be highly medicinal and has healing properties. Ayurveda and many other alternative healing systems recognise the medicinal properties of cowdung. In the practice of Agnihotra we need only a few pieces of dried cowdung to prepare the fire.

Now we require two pinchfuls of raw-rice grains at each time for daily practice of Agnihotra. As far as possible the rice grains should be full, meaning broken pieces of rice grains are to be removed. Next, we require a few drops of cow's pure Ghee. Remember only cow's Ghee is used for Agnihotra. And no other Ghee. The importance and medicinal properties of cow's Ghee have been known since thousands of years. According to Ayurveda cow's Ghee is the best amongst the entire range of Ghees. It is a tonic, cardiac stimulant and invigorating. It is antibilious, improves memory and mental faculties. It enhances the quality of voice, beauty and complexion of the skin. Cow's Ghee is life, so says the Vedas.

The offerings of rice-grains smeared with cow's Ghee are to be made along with the chanting of two simple Sanskrit mantras.

Even a small child can easily chant them. Now let's chant the mantras :

At Sunrise :

Sooryaya Svaha,
Soorayaya Idam Na Mama
Prajapataye Svaha,
Prajapataye Idam Na Mama

At Sunset :

Agnayesvaha,
Agnaye Idam Na Mama
Prajapataye Svaha,
Prajapataye Idam Na Mama

These mantras are in Sanskrit and are ordained by the Vedas. All the alphabets of the Sanskrit language are endowed with special vibrational powers. Their utterance in esoteric combination produces unique sound waves of magnificent vibration.

Agnihotra mantras are very special. Their chanting generates relaxing and purifying effect on the mind. These mantras create vibrations of love and peace. The words Agni, Soorya and Prajapati in the Agnihotra mantras denote the Supreme Universal Force. These are various names by which the Divine Power is referred. Agnihotra mantras are highly potent. They produce a special vibration, which positively manipulates our mind and the atmosphere. These mantras should be

chanted just as they are ordained. Remember, this mantra is not merely a prayer. It transcends a prayer due to its vibrational impact. Therefore translating these mantras in any other language will be highly inappropriate.

While uttering the mantras, do not just mumble neither be very loud. Agnihotra mantras possess the quality of soothing and relaxing the end. It is advised to utter them in the same spirit.

We have now learned what Agnihotra is. We will now elaborate on how it should be actually practised everyday. The following directions will guide you to adopt its practice on the first available opportunity.

Check the local sunrise-sunset timings from the annual timetable provided for performing Agnihotra. Normally, about 5 to 10 minutes before the actual sunrise time, arrange pieces of dry cow dung cakes in the Agnihotra pot. First take a small piece of cowdung cake and place it at the bottom of the pot. Now, put guggul, camphor or cotton wick, duly soaked in cows ghee on these bottom piece and then start arranging the other pieces of the cow dung cake around it neatly. Use a matchstick and light the fire. If necessary use a small hand-fan so that all the pieces are fully ablaze by Agnihotra time. Take two pinchful of clean, unbroken rice grains (raw) on the palm of your left hand or in a small copper dish. Smear these rice grains with a few drops of cow's pure ghee. Divide these ghee smeared rice grains in two equal parts. Keep an eye on your watch and no sooner its needles touch the exact sunrise time, start uttering the first mantras `Sooryaya Svaha', immediately on saying `Svaha' offer one part of the rice grains to the fire and at the same time continuing the mantra complete the first line uttering `Sooryaya Idam Na Mama'. Uttering the other line of the mantra offer the other part of the rice grains to the fire after saying `Prajapataye Svaha' and complete the mantra uttering 'Prajapataye Idam Na Mama'. Concentrate on the fire till the offerings are fully burnt. The morning Agnihotra concludes here.

In the evening, before the Agnihotra time, remove very carefully the morning Agnihotra ash from the pot and put it in a bag or box specially kept aside for it. Repeating the morning process prepare a fresh fire from the cow dung cake in the pot. Also prepare two equal parts of the cow ghee smeared rice grains for the two offerings. Exactly at sunset time accompanied by the chanting of the sunset Agnihotra mantra `Agnaye Svaha' offer the first part after saying `Svaha' and complete the mantra by saying `Agnaye Idam Na Mama'. Similarly uttering the second line of the mantra, offer the other part to the fire after saying `Prajapataye Svaha' and complete the mantra uttering 'Prajapataye Idam Na Mama'. Concentrate on the fire till the offerings are fully burnt. This concludes the evening Agnihotra.

Agnihotra is easily practicable for anybody on earth. Now we will briefly tell you about the scientific studies that have been carried out on Agnihotra.

SOME SCIENTIFIC OBSERVATIONS

In one of the studies it was observed that the practice of Agnihotra resulted in improving the motivation of a demotivated drug-addict to absent from `Smack'. In another study it was observed that Agnihotra practice is a useful adjunct in the treatment of alcoholism.

In the field of neurophysioligical studies it was observed that EEG showed significant changes during Agnihotra and mental tranquility was observed in the entire subject.

A practising microbiologist from Mumbai observed remarkable bacteriostatic effects during the process of Agnihotra.

Studies on Agnihotra ash have revealed that the ash has effective healing properties.

In the field of Agnihotra too it is observed that Agnihotra atmosphere and its ash induces rapid seed germination. It is also observed that Agnihotra ash is an effective fertilizer and helps in releasing soluble phosphates from the soil. Agnihotra and its ash is widely being used in natural farming practices.

'Kirlian' photographs of human hand after Agnihotra showed increased harmonious energy patterns with healing effect.

Apart from this, today many prominent researchers are engaged in research on Agnihotra to find yet more beneficial aspects of its regular practice.

Friends, we have seen how Agnihotra is useful in various fields of life. Agnihotra is a `Siddhanta', it is the `Truth'. Agnihotra is the all-giver. Thousands of individuals and families all over the world are regularly practising Agnihotra today. Since many years Agnihotra has brought light, peace, prosperity and happiness in the lives of innumerable people all around the world. This is not a new sect or cult. Agnihotra is a Vedic process of healing the mind and the atmosphere. It is based on scientific principles. Agnihotra is a holistic process of health and mental peace.

You too can make your life healthy, happy and meaningful by the practice of Agnihotra.

Come, do not waste time and start Agnihotra from today, do not delay any more. Believe only in what you experience.



VALUES OF HOLISTIC LIVING – A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Mrs. V. BALAMBAL

India is a vast country in which people belonging to various region, religions, languages, castes, creeds, sects, races etc. live together in spite of various differences. Though there are geographical differences, when we think and talk of India or Bharat, we think of one great country geographically well knit. Though there are many religions, all religions believed in religious toleration. There is emotional unity also in India. The important elements of Indian culture are the following :- (1) Indian culture is more spiritualistic than materialistic, (2) More stress on religion and religious toleration, (3) It has the capacity to absorb other cultures, (4) It is very wide in its approach, (5) It allows freedom of thought and expression, (6) It is very dynamic. But the unity of India is challenged. The hindrances on the path of our unity are regionalism, linguism, communalism, casteism, individualism, selfishness, disintegration of families etc.

The youth are to be well taught about these dangers and how to get over the hindrances in the path of unity. They are to be taught on the following :- (1) religions should be used to forge feelings of oneness, (2) need for learning national history, highlighting various values of life with examples, (3) improving the means of transport and communication to come closer, (4) stressing the importance of national language though regional languages are to be encouraged, (5) need for good teachers, (6) role of youth in eradicating social evils and realizing human values, (7) knowing about great seers, reformers and leaders, (8) importance of interdining, intercaste marriage, education, respect for one another etc. (9) telling the youth about the glory of Indian customs and manners, and their role in promoting national unity. ■



MAN, NATURE AND VEDAS

VEDAS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND WORLD PEACE

The Vedas are the result of intuition. They are the basic Volumes of Sanskrit. Since the inception of the universe the Veda-Mantras were perceived by the Rishis and Saints. The first Sukta of Rigveda is Agni-Sukta, which is of prime importance in the five elements of the human organism. The Rigveda embodies prayers. They are of great utility, projecting the good of all, the prayers to the Devas – Varuna Sukta, Surya Sukta, Usha Sukta, etc. dominate the sustainable development and environmental Science. There is action-wise mention of Yogic-Kriyas in the Yajurveda. It describes all the principles of the purification of environment from the earth to the sky. If the Yagas are performed properly, our wishes shall be fulfilled.

Similarly, in the Sama Veda and Atharva Veda, there are such principles and teachings advocated that provide peace, amity and intellectual development. The construction of buildings according to Vedic principles remove several physical troubles, mental agonies and gives self-satisfaction.

The ancient Sanskrit classics are very comprehensive of the service of humanity. From the Samhita period to the Brahmanas, Aranyaks, and the Mantras the Upanishads are full of Universal Welfare, and human conduct principles provide an automatic Sustainable and Environmental Development.

In modern times there is a great need of research in such principles of Vedic period which remove environmental pollution and place before us the ideals of a new society and awakening for sustainable and equitable development of the universe.

– Dr. Shiva Varan Shukla

MAN AND NATURE

From the time of Vedas, Indian Philosophy has shown the tendency to develop from analytic to speculative, from materialistic to idealistic and spiritualistic and from reductionistic to holistic approach. The Upanishadic and Vedantic tenets treat the man not as an individual, but as a part of this multi-varied cosmological system. They treat man, nature, the cosmos, the central vital power or energy that controls and rules the cosmos, and the whole universe as one. Thus a concept of totality is the basic principle of almost all the systems of Indian Philosophy.

In the Vedas, Brahmanas and in the Sutra texts, one comes across many ideas related to environmental and ecological studies.

The ancient Indian system of medicine, Ayurveda, holds high the importance of this holistic approach. In Ayurveda, mind and the body and man and the nature are taken as a whole. Modern medicine is now giving stress on this holistic approach to find remedy to its many difficult problems in treatment. Thus the holistic approach of the Vedic seers have much relevance and importance today.

– Dr. C.M. Neelakandan

CREATING CHARACTER-BASED INSTITUTIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD

Corporatisation of different institutions has been the recent trend in the world for everything. It is found in the kitchen of different types and qualities of organizations. Profit seekers, Governments, Non-government organizations, Missionaries, Family-run-enterprises, Cluster of individuals, and any kind of Service providers do seek to get corporatised in some form or the other. The term corporatisation refers to the art and tool of the organizations to get the involvement of more number of people through their active participation in the capital formation and enhancing values in financial terms. This might appear as their inherent drive to gather support in terms of physical participation of those people. Distributing the effects of the running of an organization among various segments of activities would mean getting more people in the bracket of their ideals and jurisdictions. Corporatisation also means that the philosophy underlying the formation of the organization could be diluted to the extent the new participant would like to get involved in. From this point the process of degenration starts. What could be the reason behind this? Is this the most natural trend or is it the impact of the gradual dilution of the spirit of the organizational character – the answer could be obtained through the study of :

Organisational Climate
Character-based Organisation
Vedantic Solution to Corporate Problems

– Dr. R.P. Banerjee

THE ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHT OF VEDIC RISHIS

The deep insight of vedic Rishis on Environment is traceable in Vedic Literature. The four fold divisions of Vedic Literature, namely, Samhita, Brahmana, Aranyaka and Upanishads carry valuable information on nature.

The western scholars generally feel that the Environmental awareness has dawned in the minds of intellectuals, only in the second half of the present century, and that too in the western world. But it is a matter of great surprise that our ancient Literature is a treasure house of Environmental wisdom. A critical and contextual re-reading of our ancient texts, namely, Vedas, Puranas, Itihasas, Dharmasastras, Kavyas, Natakas etc. pave the way to bring to light valuable information on Environment. Several Indologists belonging to various parts of the globe now dwell deep on the sacred texts of Ancient India in search of Environmental principles. The emotional balance between man and nature is well depicted in the Vedic literature.

– Dr. P.C. Muralee Madhavan

VEDIC REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Ms. BHAGIRATHI RAMANATHAN

Cognitive correction in modification of thoughts in youth motivation – vedantic approach

INTRODUCTION

Mind is the function of brain and thought is the function of mind. Individuals are classified based on their thinking levels and every individual raises himself to higher levels of life by his determined efforts only.

As stated by Manu,

"Pondering within himself that his upward and downward courses (here and hereafter) follow from virtue and vice, man should constantly engage his mind in the practice of virtue".

Man's progress, secular or spiritual, starts with self-reliance : "heaven helps those who help themselves" is a well known saying. According to Carlyle, the highest of all possession is self help.

Sankara remarks :

"As in a person's determination *(Dhya Vasya Samkalpa)*, while living here on this earth so does he become after death".

Chandogya Upanishad says,

"Now verily a person consists of will. According to the will a person has in this world, so does he become on departing hence, let him therefore, form his will".

As explained by Swami Vivekananda,

- Every thought that we think
- Every deed that we do – after a certain time becomes fine, goes into seed form, so to speak, and lives in the fine body in a potential form and after a time it emerges again and bears its results.
- The results condition the life of man.
- Thus he moulds his own life.
- Man is not bound by any laws excepting those which he makes for himself.
- Our thoughts
- Our words
- Our deeds are the threads of the net which we throw round ourselves, for good or for evil. Once we get in motion a certain power, we have to

take the full consequences of it. This is the law of Karma.

The threefold body and the fivefold sheath :

The psycho-physical vehicle or the self – the real man can be comprehended into two different ways as

- the threefold body
- the fivefold sheath
- besides the physical body, the outstanding factor of human personality, every individual has two more bodies.
- The subtle body and
- The causal body – which are more potent, though invisible. The three bodies make up a man's psycho physical constitution. While the physical body is outermost, the causal body is the innermost of the three. It is through the physical body that we contact the external world.
- Indeed the three bodies serve respectively as the medium of man's threefold daily experience.
- Waking
- Dream and
- Dreamless sleep
- The gross body – *stula sareera* – the Physical body
- The subtle body – *sukshma sareera*
- The causal body – *karana sareera*
- According to Samkara,
- The physical body is composed of the seven ingredients :
- Marrow, bone, fat, flesh, blood, skin and cuticle and like any other object that comes into being, the physical body is subject to six modifications *(satbhava-vikara)* namely,
- Origination
- Subsistence
- Growth
- Transformation
- Decay and
- Destruction
- The subtle body – the constitution of *sukshma sareera – the linga sareera* – the index body – the subtle body composed of the five subtle elements in their rudimentary, uncompounded state. It is the five subtle elements –
- Ether – Akasha
- Air – Vayu
- Fire – Tejas
- Water – Appu
- Earth – Prithvi

which by their five fold combination called Pancheekaranam (quintiplication) Produce the five gross elements. Naturally, the subtle body is too fine to be discerned

by the microscope. It has seventeen component factors. As defined by Sankara,

The five pranas – *prana, apana, vyana, udhana,* and *samana.*

The five visible sense organs – the ears, the skin, the eyes, the palate and the nose. The five visible motor organs – the tongue, the hands, the feet, the anus and the sex organs.

The mind – the inner instrument (*anthakarana*) has two distinct phase – *manas* and the *buddhi.* According to its twofold function.

- deliberation and
- determination or decision takes place
- All these seventeen components of the subtle body are the products of the five subtle or rudimentary elements.
- The subtle body is the respository of all the subtle forces developed by the organs and the mind which belong to it. Whatever capacity, whatever tendency, good or evil a person acquires, remain in the subtle body as potencies.
- "It is because the impression left on the mind by our actions, perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and desires are accumulated there in latent form. The soul passes out of the gross body. The subtle forces being prevalent, in due course, determine the individual's journey hereafter.
- The psycho-physical constitution of every individual is shaped primarily by the "Subtle forces" conveyed by the subtle body from his previous birth.
- The causal body is the medium of experience of dreamless sleep.

SEATS OF BODY AND THEIR STATES OF EXPERIENCE

The gross body is the seat of waking experience, the subtle body of dream experience and the causal body is the seat of deepsleep experience.

In deepsleep the mind reaches the very base of the subtle body. This is the causal body underlying the subtle.

The causal body is of the nature of unspecified ignorance and emits bliss.

The threefold body – the gross, subtle and causal body constitute the five fold sheath or covering of the self, which is distinct from both.

The five sheaths are :

The physical sheath

The vital sheath

The mental sheath

The intelligent sheath and

The blissful sheath

They are successively finer and finer. The physical sheath is the outermost and grossest and the blissful sheath is the innermost and the finest of them all.

The sheaths are preceded by the succeeding ones. As stated by the Taittiriya Upanishad :

"The physical sheath is filled by the vital sheath.

The vital sheath is by mental sheath.

The mental sheath is by intelligent sheath.

The intelligent sheath is by blissful sheath.

These are called as sheaths because they are like the coverings of the luminous self, the radiance of which however becomes manifest through them in the world of phenomena.

The physical body forms the physical sheath.

The subtle body forms the vital, the mental and the intelligent sheaths.

The causal body forms the blissful sheath.

The five sheaths do not exhaust human personality nor can they exist independently of the self, their witness, on which they are superimposed through *avidya* or *agnana.*

The physical and the vital sheaths : The relations – the physical body is the physical sheath which is called the *annamayakosha* which is the product of food and which is animated by the vital sheath called the *pranamayakosha* the sheath of *prana.*

The Mental and the Intelligent Sheaths : Their relation

The mind is the *anthakarana* (The internal instrument) which defines the position of the mind in the human personality.

The term "manas" which usually refers to the mind as a mind as a whole and it has two phases namely, the deliberative and determinative mind.

The **manas** refers to the **volitional** aspect, **buddhi** refers to the cognitive aspect of the mind.

Congition and **volition** are two **distinctive powers of the mind.**

The volition mind with the five organs of perception.

- Audition
- Touch
- Vision
- Taste and
- Smell constitute the mental sheath (*manomayakosha*)

The cognitive mind with five organs of perception constitute the intelligent sheath (*vignanamayakosha*).

The relation of the intelligent sheath with the volitional and the vital is thus indicated by the **Vedanta-sara.**

Among these sheaths the intelligent sheath, which is possessed of the power of cognition, is the agent;

- the mental sheath which possesses of the power volition is the instrument and
- the vital sheath which is possessed of power of activity, is operation.

Samkara gives a graphic description of the intelligent sheath (*vignanamaya kosha*) as following.

Buddhi, the cognitive mind, with its modification (such as egoism) combined with the organs of perception and having the characteristics of agent (the ideas of being a knower and doer), forms the *vignanamaya kosha* which is the cause of man's transmigration.

The vedantic view of the fivefold sheath reminds us of James Ward's conception of human personality as consisting of four concentric selves. In his principles of psychology he enumerates them;

- The pure Ego or self
- The thinking and willing self
- The imaging and desiring self
- The sensitive and appetitive self

Agnana a positive entity :

Agnana is not a negative entity; it is something positive. Some people hold agnana is absence of knowledge and is therefore negative. Agnana is positive or Bhavarupa. It produces the *pratibhasika* and the *vyavaharika sattas.* Agnana functions as concelaing the true and projecting the false. These activities which cannot be performed by something non-existence. A non-existent thing cannot be destroyed. Darkness must exist to be destroyed. Hence agnana is not absence of knowledge. It is something and positive (*yatkincit*) and ***bhavarupa.***

CONCLUSION

If one aspires for the correction of the cognitive mind, rather understand the *bhavarupa* of the mind and re-orient thinking and valid knowledge, it would help one in winning the goal in his life: especially in youth period, thinking in one's life is vague and by experience only one could correct his cognitive mind. Instead, parents could give the right knowledge, valid knowledge to the cognitive minds of their children and by practising such thoughts one could achieve his goals in life.

As claimed by the Chandogya Upanishad, a man is made from his will.

If one aims in correcting "the anthakarna" the fine body and acts on right thinking I am sure the vedic vision is reflected on the social life of man in this universe and this thought is an opening for the milliennium.

Ref : *The Goal and the Way,* page No.137, 133-134, 50, 63, 66, 65-69.

1. The Law of Karma and Freedom of Action.

2. Chapter II page No.49
3. Agnana–A Positive Entity – Ref page No.49, Maya – What is Advaita?

Books Referred

1. What is Advaita? By Professor P. Sankaranarayanan.
2. The Goal and the Way – the Vedantic Approach to life's problems by Swami Satprakashananda.
3. Consciousness in Advaita – by Vidyalankara Professor S.K. Ramachandra Rao. ■

The subject of cognition is a topic of research not only in recent times but also in the hoary past. It is also a matter of interest to people of all cross sections, startng from a common man to medical professionals, psychologists, physicists and philosophers. While the medical research concentrated on anatomy and physiology of the brain from a treatment point of view, the studies on psychology attempted to analyse the behavioural patterns of individuals in different states of consciousness. The philosophical pursuits have reached the horizons of various levels of cognition and means of valid knowledge, while the physics dealt with the relations between the objects and senses....

From a close scrutiny of the methods of cognition in both modern science and ancient Indian philosophical systems, it can be observed that the functioning of Y cells of the visual system in regard to the identification of the objects at gross level is exactly matching with the concept of indiscriminate knowledge (Nirvikalpa Jnana). Similarly the finding of X cells analysing the objects at minute level is matching with the concept of discriminate knowledge (Savikalpa Gnana). Also the finding that the colours are generated in the brain, but not existing outside is exactly matching with the description of mind in Indian philosophy, that the world is in the mind itself but not outside.

However, it may be noticed that the modern science adopted waking state of consciousness as the frame of reference, whereas the Indian philosophy was evolved with an experience of totality, of all states of consciousness put together and cognition of oneness from individual to universe. The findings from our ancient literature in regard to the relations of the objects and the senses, and also the details of means of valid knowledge, will be highly useful to the computer scientists working on simulation studies and information systems, as cognition is primarily a task of information processing under well coordinated conditions.

– RVSS Avadhanulu

CONCERN OF VEDA FOR THE COMMON MAN

T.P. SREERAMAN

PRAYERS

Veda is an ocean of knowledge – all branches and streams of knowledge. Vedic philosophy is sublime. The spiritual potency of Veda is immense.

We shall try to examine whether Veda was concerned with the day to day life of the common man – his food, clothing, shelter, education, job opportunities, employer-employee relations, medical care, recreation, relation with his kith and kin, his reputation – patriotic fervour, the ruler, the natural character and finally his self-realisation.

Here is a Mantra which gives an indication about the concern Veda has for the commonest of common man. "The Supreme Lord (enshrined in the Sun) is seen by the cowherds and the woman fetching water from the source." That is to say – God is accessible to all people. The same idea is found in other Mantras also. The humble feel secure under his protection. (Rig Veda 7-100-4)

"O Lord you are common to all people".

"We invoke INDRA who is common to all".

Now let us examine one by one the basic needs.

FOOD

Yajur Veda Samhita starts with the words : ईषेत्वा ऊर्जेत्वा for abundance of food and energy. The famous Vasordhara (Chamaka) Mantra (T.S.4-7; V.S.18-1) which enumerates noble objects to be achieved by the grace of God starts with the words वाजश्चमे प्रसवश्चमे (यज्ञेनकल्पन्ताम्) may we be blessed with abundance of food and energy. In the Sapta Padi ritual which is an important item in the marriage, the first prayer again is for abundance of food.

इष एक पदीभव (Aswalayana Grihya Sutra 1-7-18)

And in the *Apastamba Grihyasutra*, "May Lord Vishnu bless us with abundance of food when you take this first step with me, Oh bride".

Production of food requires effort. Veda promotes interest in cultivation. It says, "Cultivate land. Consider the wealth so produced as prestigious and enjoy it.

Cultivation of land – production of food is treated as divine". One full *Suktha* is devoted to this (R.V.4-57).

Two mantras from this, we will see : "Oh, auspicious ploughshare, we worship you. Come to us, bless us, prosper us and bring fruits to us." (RV 4-57-6)

"Happily may the plough turn up the land, happily go the plough as with the Oxen. With honey and milk Oh rain God, make us happy, grant us prosperity Oh SUNA and SEERA". (RV 4-57-8).

"Do not speak ill of food, do not waste food, produce food in abundance – do not send any body who has come to your house without giving food – Commands VEDA".

Acquire abundance *(Taithiriyopanishad)* of food by any means whatsoever. This is Veda's command and advice.

It should be observed as a Solemn Vow तद्व्रतम्. By observing this Vow one becomes the possessor and enjoyer of food and becomes great by progeny, cattle wealth and effulgence born of sacred wisdom and reputation due to right conduct. *(Taithiriyopanishad)*

VEDA condemns one who does not share food with others : केवलाघो भवति केवलादी (RV 10-117-6).

There is a mantra in the *Mahanarayanopanishad (Taithireeya-aranyaka)* stating that by giving food everything is given to a person, to achieve even self-realisation :

अन्नेन प्राणः प्राणेर्बलं बलेन तपः
तपसा श्रद्धा श्रद्धया मेधा मेधया मनीषा
मनीषया मनो मनसा शान्तिः शान्त्या चित्तं।
चित्तेन स्मृतिम् स्मृत्या स्मारं
स्मारेण, विज्ञानं विज्ञानेनात्मानं वेदयति
तस्मादन्नं ददन् सर्वाण्येतानि ददात ॥

By food, lifebreath and sense are nourished; by nourishment the body get strong which enables performance of Tapas, by tapas one attains progressively mental power, self control, reflection, calmness of mind, experience of truth and finally, self-realisation.

That is why other Smritis prohibited sale of food – *Annavikrayam.*

Veda has mentioned about many types of grains and cereals.

CLOTHING

There are many mantras on clothing. Paramatman is described as

"He who exists as the warp and woof in all created beings.

स ओतः प्रोतश्च विभुः प्रजासु

(Mahanarayanopanishad)

One mantra describes all the activities in the production of cloth and says that each one of them is presided over by a

Devata (deity) like Agni, Vayu. Thus the cloth has the presence of all deities and one who wears it has the blessings of all deities.

SHELTER

We get an idea about the architectural acumen of Vedic Society from the layout. If the *Yagasala* – with a compact place to preserve the ritual fires, a spacious hall for the main ritual, a store for keeping the main offering materials and implements and the main altar adjacent to it, a place for washing vessels, a place for dumping unwanted materials etc. Comfort, convenience and hygiene are given due importance. There is mention about thousand pillar mansions.

EDUCATION

Learning *(Swadhyaya)* and teaching *(Pravachana)* were given the high priority. Veda says conclusively that they are really and assuredly Tapas.

तद्धितपः तद्धितपः *(Taithiriyopanishad)*

The Rishi prays that students may come to him from all sides, in large numbers and that they may be disciplined, self restrained and peaceful.

May they come from all sides like the incessant flow of water (in a river) and incessant flow of time.

In one short section in the *Taithiriyopanishad,* the words *Swaadhyaaya* and *Pravachana* are repeated 12 times.

Yajur Veda makes a declaration, "I shall speak these auspicious words (Veda) to all people.

यथेमाम् वाचम् कल्याणीम् आवदानि जनेभ्यः

(V.S. 26-2)

to my own people and to foreigners.

स्वाय चारणायच (V.S.26-2)

This shows that students from other countries were getting educated in our country.

That Vedic learning was widespread is confirmed by the fact that Hanuman according to Valmiki Ramayana was well-versed in all the four Vedas (*Kishkindha Kanda*) and he could find Rakshasas in Lanka engaged in *Swadhyaya* (*Sundara Kanda*).

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Agriculture and cloth production are the two occupations providing jobs for crores of people even today. We saw the importance given to these in Vedic Society –

The famous Srirudra Mantra *(Satarudeeyam)* T.S.4-5-Veda propitiates professionals – carpenters, chariot makers, ceramic workers, blacksmiths, hunters, fishermen, engineers, physicians, soldiers, ministers/consultants, merchants, advocates and so on.

All the professions are raised to the level of Godworship.

EMPLOYER - EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

We understand from *Srouth* literature and *Sroutha* practices that the employer-employee relations were well defined and ideal conditions prevailed in Vedic Society. The principles of personnel management and human resources development were well developed.

1. There is a system of organising employees under departments or *Ganams.* We can prepare an organisation chart and a functional chart - *Adhwaryu Ganam, Hotru Ganam, Brahma Ganam, etc.*
2. There is a clear description of jobs, duties, responsibilities of each and every employee. The activities to be performed, the Vedic hymn to be recited or chanted and the order in which all these are to be done are all laid out in the *Sroutha* texts.
3. Each employee has a standard nomenclature.
4. Minimum qualifications are fixed.
5. The service of an employee cannot be terminated except in rare and extreme circumstances.
6. An employee cannot leave the Yoga before its conclusion except in extreme circumstances. In such a case a new employee coming in his place has to be placed in the lowest position of the organisation chart irrespective of the position occupied by the employee who leaves. In other words, seniority is protected.
7. Two jobs cannot be combined nor can any position be kept vacant.
8. There is grade for remuneration. Remuneration has to be fair.

   The normal division in a Soma yaga where 16 persons are employed is as under.

			For 100 units of remuneration
12 units each for the 4 persons at the topmost level	12 x 4	=	48
6 units for those in the next level	6 x 4	=	24
4 units for those in the next level	4 x 4	=	16
3 units for those in the next level	3 x 4	=	12
			100

9. The remuneration is paid much before the conclusion of the yagna. Therefore there is no chance for the performer of the yagna to reduce or postpone or deny remuneration.
10. The employer's interest is also protected. Before commencement of the yagna the employees have to take an oath affirming that they will successfully complete the yagna and work as a team and will not cause any harm to the project. At the conclusion

there is the termination of this agreement also.

सख्यविसर्जनम्

11. The recruitment is by a consultant. The interview is interesting.
12. The institution of Satra or prolonged yagna-lasting for several days or even years has a unique theme.

"All are employers - All are employees. i.e. Everybody works and all share the fruits of the efforts." Probably this is Vedic Socialism.

RECREATION

Sports and games were given great important. There is the ritual of the chariot race in Vayapeya yaga. The Vedic story behind this says that the Devatas once conducted a race to settle a dispute.

Brihaspathy came first and he attained Swarajya.

1. Therefore Brihaspathi who is the deity of intellectual excellence was also a top class sportsman.
2. Proficiency in sports was a prerequisite for preeminence in Vedic Society.

Vedic people loved poetry and music.

To become a Rishi one had to be a poet. Music was part of life. The Sama Veda Mantras have all the seven swaras. It is very pleasant to hear them when they are chanted by masters. The *Taithiriyopanishad* says: once Brahmanhood is realised, in the state of Sachidananda he sings *Samagana.*

The implements used for yaga are very artistic. Vedic people loved good food. There is a prayer meaning –

"May I enjoy food in a feast in the company of friends, relatives."

MEDICAL CARE

There are many prayers for recovery from various ailments. There is mention about medical miracles like brain transplantation, artificial limbs, restoration of eyesight, hearing, treatment of burns, rejuvenation, etc.

The declaration of a medical shop owner that he has stored all herbs so that the patients may get cured is notworhty.

(RV 10-97-7)

ESTEEM OR REPUTATION

यशस or reputation was a motive force in the society. (RV 2-41-13)

प्रशस्तिमं बनस्कृति Mother bless me with renown.

इन्द्र इव यशस्वी भवति

He will be renowned like Indra.

SELF RESPECT

Vedic people had a high level of self respect.

In marriage ritual the couples are blessed that they may not be dependent on anybody.

The ruler and the subjects : Veda envisages the ruler to be liked by the

subjects. It goes one step further when it says "The King should be selected by the people". The Yajur Veda says that the king derives all the power, valour, wisdom and splendour from the people.

PATRIOTIC FERVOUR

The Bhoomi Sooktha in the Atharva Veda 12.1 eulogizes earth as mother.

NATIONAL CHARACTER

Satyam, Truth, and Rtam, cosmic order, are the anchorsheets of Vedic culture.

God is TRUTH.

TRUTH upholds earth.

Adherance to truth in day to day life finds emphatic expression in Veda.

There is a story in the Chandogya Upanishad. Five householders approach a king for spiritual enlightenment. Since he was performing a yajna, as the role of yajna prescribes honouring scholars by offering gifts, he presents them gifts. They hesitate to accept as they were not sure whether the money was free from blemish. The king assures them about the acceptability of the gifts saying that, "There is no thief in my kingdom, no miser, no drunkard, no one who does not perform rituals, no one uneducated, no one who is unchaste". (*Chandogya Upanishad* 5-11-6)

There is an almost similar statement in Valmiki Ramayana Balakanda – 6th Sarga. There are prayers in Veda to lead us by the right path in life and in earning wealth.

FAMILY AS A SOCIAL UNIT

Veda gives much importance to family as a Social Unit. Affection and affinity for the kith and kin are very strong. There is separate nomenclature for each close kith and kin.

The Vedic Society was very proud about the family. The name of one's ancestors are to be mentioned loudly at the time of marriage, yajna, etc.

The *Sradhakanda* and *Asoucha-kanda* proclaim the strong affinity for one's kith and kin. Even God is worshipped as a father, mother, brother, friend, etc.

THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Woman is given great importance in Vedic culture. One's wife is considered to be one half of his self.

She is the gift of Gods given to the husband for overlordship of his household. (RV 10-85-36)

Veda declares that house means wife. (RV 3-53-4)

A married man, even though he does not own a house is called गृहस्थ. An unmarried man even though he owns a house is not a गृहस्थ. No Vedic ritual can be performed without the presence of the wife by the side of the performer.

Panini's definition of पत्नी is पत्युर्नोयज्ञ संयोगे. Veda Mantra blesses the newly wed

bride to be empress of her husband's father, mother, brothers and sisters. (RV 10-85-46)

CONJUGAL HAPPINESS

There are many mantras praying for long happy married life and abiding mutual love and affection of the husband and wife.

"I take thy hand in mine for good fortune that you may reach old age with me". (RV 10-85-36).

"This am I and that are you. That are you and this am I. I am the heaven you on the earth. I am Sama Veda and you are Rig Veda. We shall marry. We shall beget children, loving, bright and kind-hearted, may we live a hundred years."

(*Aswalayana Grihya Sutra* 1-7-6)

"You live in this house always together. Without separation playing with children and grandchildren, and enjoy for the whole of your life time".

We have ideal couples who are legendary: Arundhati and Vasishta, Anasuya and Atri, Lopamudra and Agastya, Sukanya and Chyavana, Savitri and Satyavan and Damayanthi and Nala.

We have to remember that the Rishis were Grihastas.

We worship our deities with their Sakthis.

Our scriptures say that Grihasthasrama is superior.

सर्वेषां आश्रमाणांतु गार्हस्थ्यं श्रेष्ठमुत्तमम् ।

(*Valmiki Ramayana* II 104)

We have statements extolling the Grihastasramam in the Mahabharatha, Manusmriti, etc.

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLIES

Vedic Society was interested in people's assemblies. Such assemblies were organised as part of yajnas. The rule was one should attend yajnas even without invitation. Great works like the Ramayana were introduced in such assemblies.

SELF-REALISATION

All the Upanishads and a substantial portion of Samhitas deal with spiritual elevation. The general outlook of Veda and Vedic Society is universal well being.

शंनो अस्तु द्विपदे
शंचतुष्पदे ।

The ultimate object of every one is self-realisation.

Let me conclude with the Veda Mantra.

संगच्छध्वं संवदध्वं सं वो मनांसि जानताम् ।
देवा भागं यथा पूर्वे संजानाना उपासते ॥
समानो मन्त्रः समितिः समानी
समानं मन चित्तमेषाम् ।
समानं मन्त्रमभि मन्त्रये वः
समानेन वो हविषा जुहोमि ॥
समनी व आकूतिः समाना हृदयानि वः ।
समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वः सुसहासति ॥

(RV 10-191-2, 3, 4)

SECULAR ELEMENTS IN THE VEDIC GṚHYASŪTRAS

Dr. S. RAMARATNAM

The word 'secular' is the most used and abused term in the Indian context to-day. Thanks to our politicians, who have been using the term without understanding its full significance, 'secular' is wrongly interpreted as something that is opposed to religion and more particularly as something that is non-Hindu. It must be remembered that Hinduism has held the people of India together for centuries. On the other hand the so called secularism has only divided people. "Religion is constructive while secularism erodes; religion inspires while secularism criticises. Religion builds while securalism dissolves; religion infuses confidence while securalism breeds suspicion." (V. Sundaram, *The Hindu,* Jan.18, 2000). The distorted view of secularism has been the cause of deterioration in the standards of decency, decorum, dignity, integrity and honesty in all walks of life. It is the root cause of general frustration and discontent among all sections of our people and more particularly the youth. It will lead to a catastrophe if this trend is not reversed in time. We have to impart to our youth the true significance of not only religion but also secularism. In fact, Hindu religion, culture, mythology and ritual are not averse to secular ideas. The present paper is an attempt to show that even the most religious rituals in the Hindu tradition exhibit a lot of secular elements that are broad based and Universal in nature.

What is meant by secularism actually? The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* gives the following meanings for the word 'secular' - (1) occurring once in or lasting for an age or century? (2) lasting or going on for ages or an indefinitely long time (3) concerned with the affairs of this world or worldly. Do any of these meanings suggest even remotely that being secular is anti religious? On the other hand it has made it clear that religion and secularism are inter-related, which is emphasised here. The scope of this paper is restricted to the Gṛhyasūtras and the Gṛhya ceremonies only.

The Gṛhyasūtras deal with the domestic rituals of the Vedic tradition. Notwithstanding their religious character, they exhibit a fair amount of secular elements that are Universal in character.

During the Upanayana ceremony, the student is advised to observe "brahmacarya" and control his sense organs effectively.

तस्मा आग्रमधर्माणि आचक्षीत । (II.8.9.V.G.)

Manu has also emphasised this point.

A student should abstain from wine, meat and women. He should avoid spicy food and refrain from using perfumes. He should not cause injury to any being and should not give room for anger, desire and jealousy. He should not indulge in gambling, gossip and the like. He should not allow himself to be carried away by music, dance and so on. It is obvious that such restrictions are imposed on the student in order to shield him from distractions and help him to concentrate on his studies. If a student were to transgress his limits, the teacher should try to correct him through loving words of advice and not by threatening him with punishments.

A teacher should never curse his student.

The Smṛti says :

शप्यमानस्य यत्पापं शपन्तमनुगच्छति ।

The teacher is responsible for the sins committed by the student.

A teacher is expected to mould the life of his student since he is equivalent to a father.

The Upanayana ritual or any ritual for that matter is only a symbol. What it stands for is more relevant and important than the ritual itself. Most of the present day problems of the youth arise due to non-control of the sense organs and a wayward life. The solution lies in educating our youth on the importance of the sense organs. On how the non-control of the sense organs leads to destruction, the Gītā says :

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनुविधीयते ।
तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नावमिवाम्भसि ॥

(Gīta.Ch II)

The mind that follows the roving sense organs blindly takes away the intellect like a typhoon a boat.

Even at the very first instance when the mind thinks of the sense object, it should be controlled, for

ध्यायतो विषयान् पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।
सङ्गात् सञ्जायते कामः कामात् क्रोधोऽभिजायते
क्रोधाद्भवति सम्मोहः सम्मोहात् स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।
स्मृतिभ्रंशात् बुद्धिनाशः बुद्धिनाशात् प्रणश्यति ॥

(Gīta Ch II)

As the mind thinks of the sense object, an attachment is developed towards them.

Attachment leads to a craving towards the sense object. A failure to attain them leads to anger, anger leads to infatuation, infatuation to loss of memory, loss of memory leads to loss of intellect which ultimately leads to total destruction. Is it religious or sectarian to say that the sense organs must be controlled? If this is not secular what else is?

The welfare of women is very much sought after in the Gṛhyasūtras. The Mahābhārata also says that the women are to be protected since they are the basis of the family structure.

Gifts once made should not be taken back, say the Gṛhyasūtras. The Smṛtis also emphasise the same thing.

The Gṛhyasūtras say that while taking food one should observe silence. Science as well as common sense will also approve it.

But there is also another opinion. On festive days one may partake food with relatives and friends, chatting and rejoicing.

The Gṛhyasūtras say that one should have regulated food habits. The Smṛtis say that one should fill only two-thirds of the stomach with food and the rest with water or air.

While drinking water or milk or any fluid one should not make any gurgling sound with the mouth. One should observe fasting at least twice a month on the *ekadasi* days so as to give a rest to the digestive system.

The Gṛhyasūtras say that the parents should search for a bridegroom for their daughter keeping in mind suitability with respect to age and the like.

But what happens is that the girl is carried away by the external handsomeness, the mother looks for the prosperity, the father education while the relatives are concerned with family details. The others are satisfied with good food only.

The Gṛhyasūtras prohibit marraige within the same 'gotra'. Marriage within the blood relations is not advisable according to science also.

Marrying maternal uncle's daughter or paternal aunt's daughter is prevalent in South India. But a number of Smṛtis condemn this practice.

Offering gifts to the poor and the needy is part and parcel of almost all the gṛhya ceremonies. The presentday sons consider their elderly parents as a burden. This is due to the influence of the Western culture and materialistc outlook. We never had such a problem all these years for, children were taught to consider their parents as gods and worship them.

मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । (Taittiriya)

Offer of gifts to parents is eulogised in the Smṛtis.

The Gṛhyasūtras recommend the observance of the practices particular to a region or family, in addition to those prescribed in the texts.

यस्मिन् देशे य आचारो न्यायदृष्टस्तु, कल्पितः ।
स तस्मिन्नेव कर्तव्यो देशाचारस्स्मृतो भृगोः ॥

This goes well with the dictum : Be a Roman when you are in Rome. The Grhyasūtras recommend the offer of gifts only to the learned. The uneducated will only be carried away by things coming his way freely and easily.

During the Upanayana, a student makes a series of promises to the teacher. The teacher says "divā mā svapsīh", that is, 'do not sleep during the day time'. How relevant for the present day generation.

After the marraige, the husband and wife are expected to observe fasting and austerities for three days.

It may look odd but it has its own significance. Though marriage gives the husband and wife freedom to enter into conjugal felicity, there has to be a caution. Their aim must be to beget excellent offspring and not simply enjoy the physical union. Throughout the marraige ceremony the prayer to the gods to grant 'suprajāh', that is, excellent children, is repeated often. According to Science also, the mood in which the husband and wife unite is responsible for 'the character of the children born. So if the husband and wife unite with the prayer that they must beget excellent children, they are sure to be blessed with the same.

The Gṛhyasūtras give guidelines for the selection of a suitable site for house building and construction. The site should be covered with tender grass which indicates a good water table underneath. It should be free from the possibility of damage. It should be suitable for the growth of plants. The plants should not issue forth the white sap, not possessing thorns and not bitter. Such a site will have a clay soil and is not suited for house building.

The land should be hard, of one colour, not too dry not unfertile, not surrounded by a desert, not damp or marshy.

The house should not have its door on the west side, the Gṛhyasūtras say, probably because the heat of the afternoon Sun may cause inconvenience to the inmates.

The main door of the house should be such that, through it, the inmates or the valuables might not become visible to the

outsiders.

Big trees like Asvatha should not be planted very near the walls of the house, understandably so since the roots of such trees may uproot the foundation.

All the rituals are meant to cleanse the mind of its impurities so that it can think of the higher ideals of life. It will become fit for concentration on the Supreme Self. Even the most sceptical or the so called retionalists cannot deny the fact that mind is the basis of all activities and that it should be kept in an undisturbed state if one wants to achieve higher goals.

So the texts prescribe tranquility of mind, an ascetic disposition, an inclination to study the sacred texts, and compassion towards all living beings. (Rvi. 1.2.2.)

The performers of rites are asked not to direct their thoughts towards the results of their rituals but towards the performance of the rites in a perfect manner. This instruction applies not only to the rituals but to all actions we perform as told in the Gita कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन. The HG 2.10.3 says "(Hiranyakesin's Gṛhyasūtra)". In the performing of rituals, one should not expect fulfilment of worldly desires.

The Agnive's Gṛhyasūtra (3.10.4, 174.20) also says, "having given up all worldly affections and devoted to meditation, one should perform the prescribed rituals. That solitude going into retirement, is regarded as conducive to success. (SG 3.1.12, Kaus G.3.1.5).

The Gṛhyasūtras lay emphasis on learning, since it leads to moral character, right conduct and a good countenance and a pleasant form. (S.G 1.2.3.)

Some of the Sūktas recited (RV 10. 177) are believed to destroy spiritual ignorance.

Another quality that is recommended for all performers is 'Shraddha', faith. Well, 'Shraddha' is applicable not only to the rituals but for all activities as well. The annual ceremonies are therefore called 'Shraddha' - *'Shraddhayaa deyam'*.

Before every ritual proper is commenced, a *Sankalpa* is made. The *Sankalpa* is an expression of determination or earnest resolution and, conscious will to direct and control one's energies in such a way as will secure the completion of the task taken up. Such a *Sankalpa* is an essential requisite for all the endeavours. A will to take up a task finish it in a proper fashion is an utmost desideratum for all actions.

It is a matter of common experience while dealing with machines and their parts that one must keep the spares ready so as to meet any contingency and prevent stoppage of the work in progress. The

ritual texts have also visualised this particular point. During the marriage ceremony, a girdle thread is to be tied around the waist of the bride. It is made of the twisted *darbha* grass. A spare for this is necessary since the twisted darbha grass is likely to break any moment.

The ritual cannot be postponed for the order of the ritual disturbed. Hence the necessity of a spare. The *Varahagrhyasūtra purusa* says, "disturbing the order of things always involves a risk; when in building a house, the earth dug up for the foundation, should not be dispensed with. It is needed for filling up the gaps, holes and inner space after raising the foundation. (VGP 14.5).

It is therefore clear that the Vedic Grhyasūtras contain a lot of secular elements and in fact they can be called as the source books of secular elements and folklore (S.R. Sehgal, *Sankhayana* G.S.H. 53-56).

So the motto for the new millennium is "Respect our age-old traditions and rituals. They have deeper significance. Perform then steadfastly. It will be contributive to your welfare".

Abbreviations

H.G.	-	Hiranyakesins Gṛhyasūtra
Kh G.	-	Khadira Grhyasūtra
M.S.	-	Manu Smrti
RV	-	Rig Veda
Rvt	-	Rig Vidana
SG	-	Sankhayana Gṛhyasūtra
VG	-	Vaikhanasa Grhyasūtra, Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam Edition, Tirupati, 1997.

VEDIC VIEWS ON VIOLENCE IN YAGAS

Dr. V. VASUDEVAN

The Indian philosophical tradition is classified into two viz., the Vedic tradition and the non-Vedic tradition. It is a well-known fact the former is in consonance with the Vedic path. Mention is made in the Vedas, of many deities and the methods of worshipping them. The present form of worship, being followed by a common man, can be traced to the Vedas. Such a doubt might arise in the mind of everyone as to whether this worship existed during the Vedic period. We, indeed, know that many types of sacrifices have been prescribed in the Vedas. The very word "Yaga" means 'deity-worship', as it originates from the root "Yaj" which means "worship of deities". The varied form of worship is seen today.

These Yagas in propitiation of the deities are holy and pure indeed. They bestow merit, enable one to reach heaven, but are not always pure. For, animal sacrifice is prescribed in rituals. Such sacrifice has been resorted to, by the ancient sages. Even a common man, now, has started thinking whether the killing of animal can be associated with a holy form of worship such as Yagas. Does it, then, mean that such a thought never occurred to the earlier sages? How cannot it be there? It is only to put an end to this practice that the Carvakas (Materialists), the Buddhists and Jains endeavoured. The other systems of philosophy accept this practice, by and large. It is analysed, hereunder, as to what the views were during the Vedic period.

NON-VIOLENCE IN VEDAS

It is to be borne in mind, first of all, that the Vedas, which have dawned for the happiness of all living beings, exhibit its concern for non-violence. We find, in many places in the Vedas, stress on compassion to all living beings, the unity of man, and goodness of mind. "Injure not others" says the Chandogya Upanishad. We read in the Epics, Puranas and Smrti texts that Non-violence (Ahimsa) is the first Dharma and that one who injures others will go to hell. The allegation of some, that the Vedas speak of violence, is born out of ignorance of the concept, difficulty in understanding it, or due to hatred. The views with regard to animal-sacrifice in Yagas, are three-fold. They are discussed in detail.

FAITH-RELATED THOUGHT

One section of people is of the opinion that killing, in general is prohibited and it leads to sin. But, the killing as part of Yaga is not a blemish since it is approved by the Vedas. The Veda itself proclaims that "one should not injure". The same Veda also prescribes "killing". Because of their faith in the Vedas and the Yaga, these people say that the killing other than in the Vedas, is unrighteous indeed.

Such a thought is well reflected in the Purvamimamsa School, which has been propounded by sage Jaimini. This school has, itself, been established to observe the Vedic rituals such as Yagas. The Yaga prescribed by the Veda, is a Dharma. It is their faith that Dharma is that which has been enjoined in the Vedas, Vedas being the Pramana or Authoritative Texts. They, hence, feel that the killing of animals as part of Yaga, is not a sin whereas killing them for other purposes is a sin. This view is based on the staunch faith reposed in the Vedas. By performing Yaga even involving killing of animal, a person, is able to go to heaven.

DISCREET VIEW

There are others who do not want to blindly follow the Vedas. They surmise that, in general, killing is a blemish. If an animal is killed, even as part of the Yaga, it is, indeed, wrong. Only those who are desirous of heaven, perform the prescribed Yaga. As a result of it, they, no doubt, reach heaven. But, subsequently, they undergo suffering too, as a result of the killing. They even become inanimate objects.

Such a thought arose in the works of the Saankhyas. This school is propounded by Sage Kapila. It does not believe in mere faith. It establishes the material elements with logical approach. But, it does not decry the Veda since many ideas are accepted from the Vedas. The existence of Soul, the knowledge and permanency of the Soul, the Prakrti being the cause of the world; such topics are based on the Vedas. Vedas is an authority. Yaga is to be performed. But, killing is a blemish. The *Yuktidipika* says, "There is a touch of impurity since killing is prescribed". Even for such a thought, the root is the Veda where killing is prohibited by all means.

NON-INJURY

Another modern view was given forth by the Vedantins. They establish that killing of animals in Yaga is not injury at all. Even in our day to day life, everything which cause pain cannot be called as "injury". A Surgeon, for instance, treats the wound, thereby generating pain. But it is not "injury" because later it is going to give the patient, happiness. A father beats the child with a view to correct him. That is not

"injury". In the same way, the animal killed in Yaga obtains golden body and goes to heaven. This is said in the Veda itself. Hence, considering the future happiness, this is not to be construed as "injury".

Sri Ramanuja says in the *Sri Bhashya* (III 1.25) that it is not a injury to kill animals in Yagas, as the animal goes to heaven. "O! Animal!". It is not your real death. There is going to be happy living in heaven. It is not injury either as it ensures happy living in heaven in the company of gods". This is what the Taittiriya Brahmana (III.7.7) says :

Thus these are the three streams of thought, based on the Vedas.

NON-INJURY IN INJURY

Even the injury in Yaga is not injury in many ways. The dictum that only one animal should be sacrificed implies that not many, not even two should be killed. If one kills many animals, he goes to hell due to "causing injury". It is with a sense of compassion and sympathy that the animal is killed in Yaga, says the *Yuktidipika* (p.50). Even Kalidasa says (*Sakuntala* VI-1) that a Srotriya is merciful even as he indulges in the act of animal sacrifice. The Veda itself indicates (Taittiriya Yajur Samhita III.4.12) that the other wild animals look at the animal tied to the post. They see through their eyes, their mind filled with sympathy. May Agni, the fire remove their grief. The motive behind this statement is that even during "injury", compassion is not to be given up.

THE NON-VEDIC THOUGHT

The non-Vedic schools of Materialists, Buddhists and the Jainas had their own views. The Carvakas (Materialists) say that there is no soul or heaven. Yaga, hence, should not be performed. Such thoughts have come because of lack of faith in the Vedas and they have been accepted too by many. They argue that if the animal goes to heaven when killed in sacrifice, why not one kill his own son.

MODERN THINKING

After the propagation of Vedantic thought by Sankaracharya, the importance of rituals has been rejected. The Vedanta proclaims that it is through knowledge, not rituals that one attains Final Emancipation. Accordingly, the practice of rituals is waning. The question of animal-injury does not arise. Those who are well-versed in Dharmasastras have even said that Yaga is not to be performed in Kaliyuga. Others feel that Yaga can be performed but animal should not be killed. In its place, a replica of the animal can be used. The scope, hence, of injury is much limited in modern times.

CONCLUSION

1. Veda, in general, abhors injury.
2. In Yaga too, only one animal is to be sacrificed, according to the prescribed rules. Killing many is prohibited.
3. The performer should have the faith that the victim will go to heaven. Otherwise, he will go to hell.
4. The performer of sacrifice should be kind.
5. There is no rule that Yaga should be performed. The Vedantic view is that Yaga is not a must for Moksha.
6. Now-a-days, the ritual practices have almost become obsolete. There is, hence, no question of injury.

The Vedic schools, by and large, stressed upon Ahimsa. Even now, those who follow the Vedic path, uphold the virtue of Ahimsa. ■

If the Vedas are the fountain-head of spiritual power, spiritual experience of a number of sages tested and revalidated, the darsanas are the attempts of man to understand man and the universe in the light of the revelation of the eternal Vedas; the Smrtis define, direct, restrain and regulate our social and personal life. If the national epics or the Itihaasas are stories of mighty heroes of virtue and valour who upheld the noblest of values bravely even at times of crisis, the Puranas refine and elevate the human emotions to satisfy the tender cravings of the heart. In short, the Vedas, Darsanas, Smrtis, Itihaasas, Puranas – all form the storehouse of Indian wisdom which is unparalleled.

Here is a quotation from Confucius – "If there be righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in character. If there be beauty in character, there will be harmony in the home. If there be harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. If there be order in the nation, there will be peace in the world".

– **Dr. Lakshmi Warier**

VEDAS FOR THE YOUTHS

O.T. KESAVAN NAMBIAR

Bharat is the land of Vedas. Among the four Vedas, Rigveda is the most important. The Vedas as a whole are the spiritual heritage of the Hindus.

Veda means knowledge. There are lots of hidden Scientific, Cultural and Spiritual values in the Vedas. The Rigveda is the oldest and complete literature of the world. Swami Vivekananda proclaimed in his famous addresses at Chicago that the "Vedas are without beginning and without end... It is the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times."

Originated in Bharat and confined to the Hindus for a long time, the knowledge of the Vedas had attracted the attention of the Westerners in the late 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. The glorified presidential addresses of Swami Vivekananda at the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago during September 1893 had further accelerated the spread of Vedic knowledge and belief among the people of the whole world.

The structure and growth of a country depends largely upon its youngsters who are the bulk of the growing generations of the future. The youngsters consider the present day education as a means for livelihood. The fundamental basis of a spiritual, moral and cultural life is forgotten at the very preliminary stage of the present day education. The present day youngsters have either no knowledge or little knowledge of the Vedas. The spirit of the Vedas and its inherent treasure of wisdom have to be developed and exposed to the younger generation.

To achieve this objective, the first and foremost task with us is to develop the study of Sanskrit language and literature among the youngsters. The foundation of the study of the Vedas depends largely on the study of Sanskrit. No doubt, attempts have been made in some directions to develop the study of Sanskrit among the children in some set up of educational institutions. But this is not adequate. More and more efforts have to be made at Government levels, and other private and voluntary organization levels, in order to

achieve the required goal and to inculcate the knowledge of Sanskrit in the minds of our young people.

The second way to expose the youths to the knowledge of Vedas is by way of translation of the Vedas in different Indian languages, keeping the original *Sukthas* as it is and written in vernacular scripts. This would go a long way to expose the youths to the Vedic knowledge and to understand and to accelerate the spirit imbibed in these glorious Indian literature. In this context it is gratifying to mention that the Rigveda has already been translated and published in Malayalam script of the original *Sukthas* with meaning in Malayalam. Let us hope that other Indian languages where there are no such translations would follow this achievement made by Malayalam in this respect and the competent persons in different Indian languages will come forward to accomplish this glorious task.

Thirdly, the Spirit and Culture of the Vedas can be propagated through different media, namely, the Television, Radio, Newspapers and other periodicals. The All India Radio is broadcasting News in Sanskrit and it is a step forward in fostering Sanskrit knowledge.

Fourthly, by organizing Vedic classes at different levels at temples, libraries and other cultural organizations, Vedic knowledge can be spread and developed.

Fifthly, by including the study of the Vedas in the educational curriculum, vedic knowledge can obtain more academic value and thereby acceptance by the people at large.

Yet another way by which vedic knowledge can be spread is by giving some sort of incentives to the students who study the Vedas at Schools and other institutions.

नमो ब्रह्मणे नमो अस्त्वग्नये
नमः पृथिवै नम ओषधीभ्यः ।
नमो वाचे नमो वाचस्पतये
नमो विष्णवे महते करोमि ओं ॥

THE ETERNAL MESSAGE OF THE VEDAS

PRIYAVRATA DAS

We do not possess a book of a date prior to the Vedas in the World Library. The Veda may be understood as one and singular in the sense it is the primary and seed knowledge of man. It is sometimes described as three in number, i.e. Rk. (Poem), Yajuh (Prose) and Saman (Song) distinguished by their nature of composition. Generally speaking, the Vedas are four – Rk., Yajuh, Saman and Atharva basing on their subject matter namely Jnana, Karma, Upasana and Vijnan.

Our Lord has manifested Himself in two ways (1) the entire creation and (2) His word. We find a beautiful verse in the Atharva Veda - देवस्य पश्य काव्यं न मेमार न जीर्यति (AV X.8.32) – "Appreciate the poetry of the Lord, the beauty of which neither dies nor decays". The Veda is the Divine Theory and the Cosmic Creation is the Divine work. Thus the Veda is the constitution of the Creation. Maharshi Patanjali in his Sutra स रग्ष पूर्वेषामपि गुरू: कालेन अनवच्छ दात् (1.26) exhorts – God is the first preceptor, and the Veda is the compendium of these percepts. God's revealed knowledge is the seed of all that man has brought up to this present status. The revealed knowledge is the highest and ultimate authority. तत् वचनात् आम्नायस्य प्रामाण्यम् says the celebrated sage Kanada. Both the Cosmic Creation and the Divine Word are eternal poems, one reflecting the other. The Creator is all perfect, even so His Creation and Words i.e. Vedas. God and His revealed knowledge are concomitant terms. This is what is implied in the expression पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् (Perfectness) and स्वतः प्रमाण (Self authority).

We have to accept the Supreme Self-authority of the Vedas. If there were no colour or form in natural objects, our eyes would have been purposeless. In the same analysis, our hearing and vocal organ would have been of no value had there been no Divine Words or Divine Speech bestowed on us. The acoustic spectrum with all finer details pre-existed any of us in Nature's creation. This explains the existence of Divine Speech which has passed on to us in the form of Sruti. In this context, it is often said that God is Word

and Word is God and God has been with the Word and Word with God.

The Sastras are *Paurusheya,* being composed by man in the light of Sruti i.e. the Vedas. It is to be emphasized that the Sruti and Sastras have to be treated differently. Swami Vivekananda describes the Sastras as second generation books. He exhorts, "the Second Class Books (of Manu, Yajnavalkya, Puranas down to the Tantra) are sub-ordinate to the Sruti (the Vedas) in as much as whenever any one of these contradicts anything in the Srutis, the Srutis must prevail".

Through millenniums our ancestors have preserved the Srutis with utmost accuracy and have drawn inspiration from the Vedic wisdom. Prof. Max Muller observes, "The Texts of the Vedas have been handed down to us with such accuracy that there is hardly a various reading". On the other hand, we find the Sastras are subject to change and interpolations with the passing of time.

Unfortunately, the nature and spirit of Vedic words were not rightly and sufficiently understood due to ignorance, prejudice and selfishness. To quote Sri Aurobindo, "The Veda passed from the saint to the priest, so now it began to pass from the hands of the priest into the hands of the scholar. And in that keeping, it suffered the last mutation of its sense, dignity and sanctity."

In spite of our past errors, it is possible and will always be possible to understand the Vedic words in their original sense with the help of the excellent compositions and guidelines provided by the Rishis, namely, Nirukta, Vyakaran and other branches of Vedanga.

Vedic vision is eternal and not confined to any age, century or millennium. The message in Rg Veda is मनुर्भव जनया दैव्यं जनम् (X.53.6) - become a man in the real sense and pass on divine progenies for the future. The Bhumi Sukta of Atharva Veda speaks thus in verse XII.1.12:

"I am the son of the Earth, Earth is my mother, Parjanya is my sire, may He promote me."

In a verse in Atharva Veda, we have the message :

"Heaven is your father, Earth the mother, Soma your brother, Aditi your sister."

Our kinship is due to our having a common father and a common mother, in the form of heavenly luminaries acting as our father, and the Earth as the mother. The bondage is further strengthened by the fact that the Supreme Lord is our father and mother both. He is our Lord and we his children.

We have in Yajur Veda –

"May all look at me with friendly eye may I look at all with friendly eye, with friendly eye may we look at one another." (Verse 36.18)

The last hymn in Rg Veda inspires the entire human race for concordance, love, humility and discipline.

"Meet together, talk together, Let your minds apprehend alike."

"Common be the prayer of these,
Common be the acquirements
Common the purpose.
I repeat for you a common prayer
I offer for you a common oblation."

Love and freedom from hatred have been nicely depicted in a verse in the Atharva Veda.

"Love one another as the cow loves the calf that she has borne." (Verse III.30.1)

The aspirant of the Vedas is ever busy with righteous work and looks for Victory. This is expressed in a Verse –

"Whilst efforts are in my right hand, sure in my left is Victory." (VII.50.8).

Fearlessness is the eternal message of the Vedic texts –

"May air's mid region give us peace and security. Security may both these, Heaven and Earth, afford me. Security be ours from West, from East, North and South, may we be free from danger. Security be ours from friend and from the unfriendly, Security from what we know and what we know not. Security ours be at night and in the day time. Friendly to me all my hopes and wishes." (XIX.51, 5 and 6)

The glory of the Earth and the Motherland is sustained by certain virtues or ethical modes. Thus speaks Atharva Veda –

"Truth, vastness, right attitude, formidability, consecration, austerity, aptitude for learning and complete dedication – these human values sustain the Earth." (XII.1.11)

The Vedas give a very wide and effective code of life – Brahmacharins, the youth dedicated to acquire knowledge at the feet of the teachers, Grhasthins who utilise the knowledge to build the primary social unit i.e. the Grha or Home and Vanaprasthins or the ones retired from the ordinary mundane responsibilities of families and yet dedicated themselves to the good of humanity, and finally the Sanyasins, who have renunciated their all and who look forward only to serve the society without malice and expectation.

One who is selfish and miserly is isolated in society –

"He alone is guilty who eats alone". (Rk X.117.6)

These are but a few eternal messages of the Vedas meant for man in all millenniums and in all cycles of creation. Let me conclude, with a verse from Yajurveda which portrays the mental experience of a spiritual mystic in a style quite characteristic of the Vedas –

पृथिव्या अहमुदन्तरिक्षं आरूह अन्तरिक्षात् दिव आरूहम् ।
दिवो नाकस्य पृष्ठ ात् स्वर्ज्योतिरगामहम् ॥ (YV XVII.67)

"From पृथिवी i.e. the physical realm, I rise up to earth's mid-region i.e. अन्तरिक्ष, the vital region of Pranas and thence to the heaven द्यौ, the mental realm and finally ascend to the world of ज्योति : or the state of complete enlightenment." ■

Satyam jnanam anantham Brahma, Satyena labhyahstapasaa hyesha Aathma samyag jnanena brahmacaryena nityam, Brahmavit Brahmaiva bhavati, Aham Brahmasmi, Tarati sokam Aathmavit, Tamaivekam jaanatha Aathmaanam anya vaacho vimunchatha, Amrtsya esha sindhuh – These words of wisdom tell us about the nature of the Ultimate Truth; Truth, austerities, self-control and true knowledge to be the means of attaining this Paramathmatattva; one who attains this knowledge becomes one with Brahman; he then becomes free from grief; knowledge of the self and giving up vain talk surely act as the bridge to immortality etc. A *sookta* on Agni from Rg Veda Samhita is of universal appeal, relevant to modern days and spreads the message of universal brotherhood, love and peace. "Let all men meet and think as with one mind. Let all hearts unite in love. Let the goal be common. May all live in happiness with a common purpose". Rg Veda thus calls for unity of thought, words and deeds among people, hymns are chanted for world solidarity. By creating this world God has given us a field – Karmabhoomi – and an opportunity for individual sacrifice. The essence of sacrifice is "existence for the sake of others". All actions performed with an element of self-abnegation are different forms of sacrifice. To the great seers of the Vedas life was a joy of sacrifice and a daily visualisation of divinity in all beings - *Isavasyamidam sarvam*. That is why one should learn the Vedas and practise well their prescriptions -

Vedo nityam adheeyatam, taduditam karma swanushtteeyataam.

- Dr. Lakshmi Warier.



THE VEDIC VISION OF VIVEKANANDA

In the perennial spirituality of India, three figures stand prominent, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo, all of them from Bengal, the chosen workshop of the Shakti of India. All of them had their distinct vision and the way of the Veda and left behind pointers and sign-posts to express divinity in terrestrial signs and sovereignty designed hints, Truth's immaculate vast was their only concern.

India of their times was under the yoke of the British Raj and to liberate her, two events, the Theosophical Society and the appearance of Swami Vivekananda at Chicago, helped very powerfully at the outset. All the three spiritual giants were Rishis and the Rishi in ancient India was an outstanding figure with a hero just behind. It is a long chain from Buddha to Vivekananda.

Vivekananda in his unique way represented what may be called spiritual practicality. Drawn by the Absolute, he felt the call of the disguised Godhead in humanity and most in the call of the fallen and the suffering, the call of self to the self in the obscure body of the universe. He stressed that each man had his own religion, and followed the free self-adaptation of his nature in its relation with the Supreme. His Vedantic vision is revealed in his famous exhortation that he desired not the supreme state with all its eight Siddhis and that he saw God in all, in the poor, the meek, the humble and the lost. His ideal of Seva was a need of his nature and demand of his times.

And what was his vision and experience? It was exactly the realization which is described in the Upanishads as a supreme experience of the Self. And the way he delivered it to the masses is unequalled in form and substance.

- C. Subbian.

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